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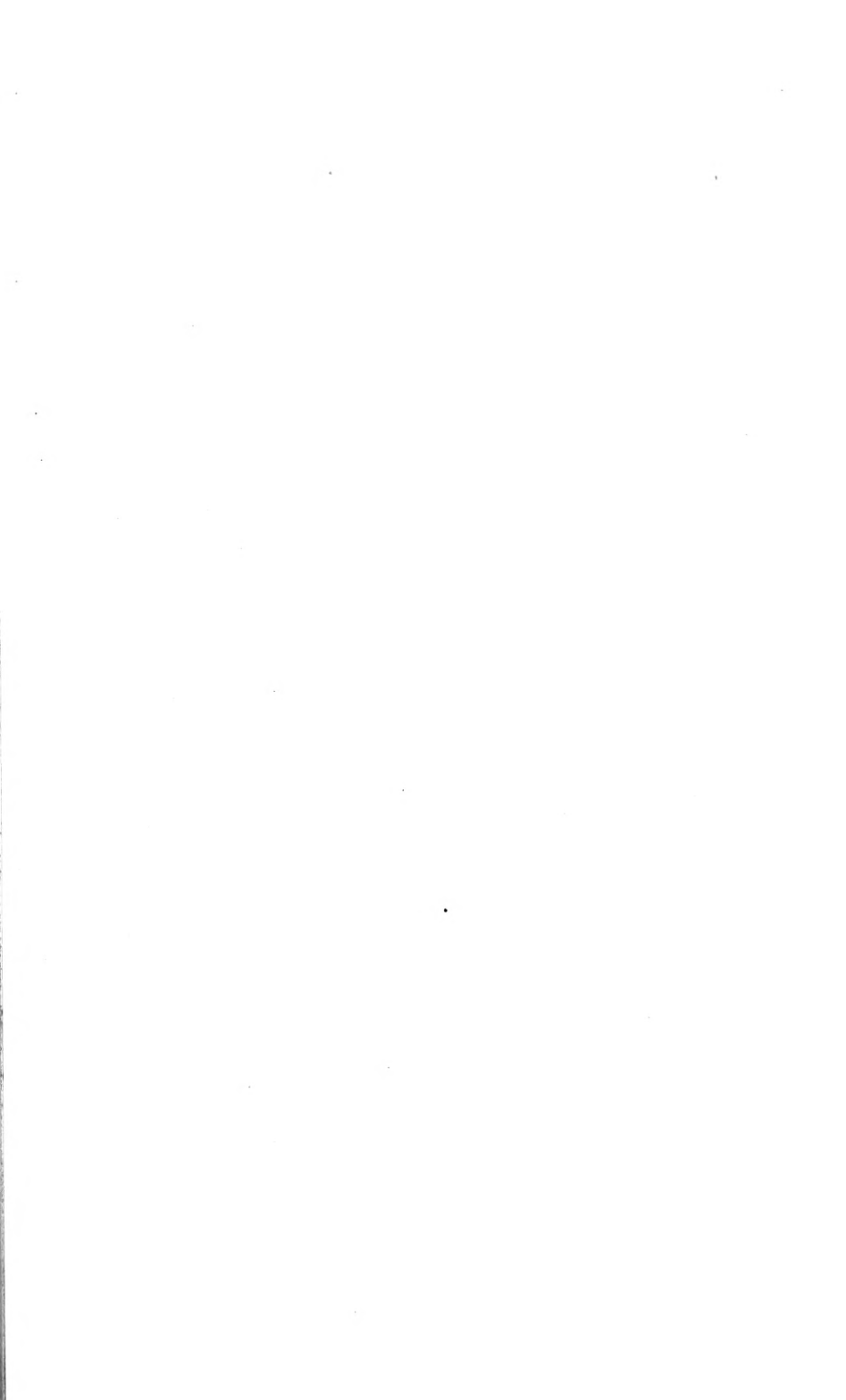


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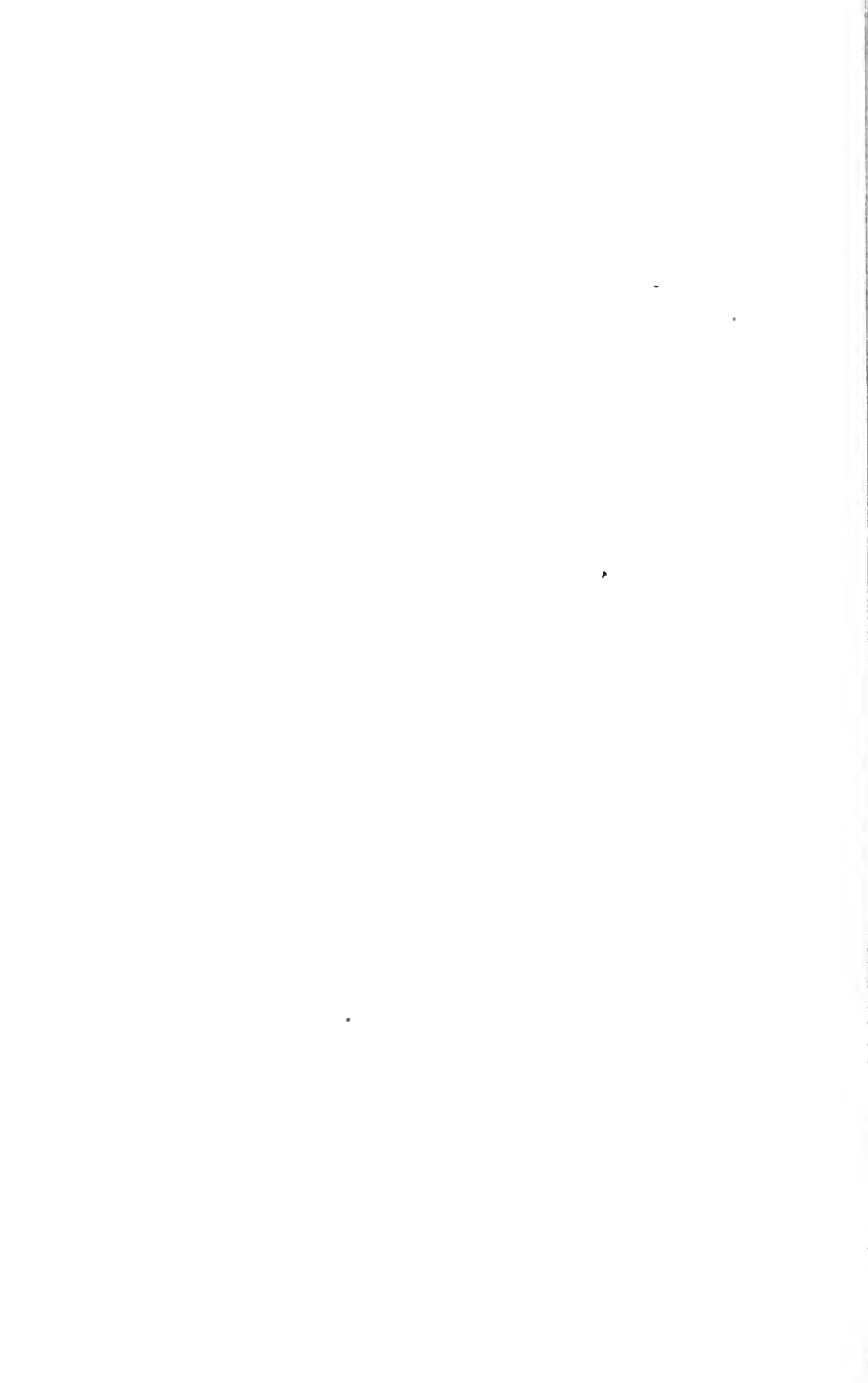
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











HISTORICAL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IN

STAMFORD, Ct.

AT THE

CELEBRATION OF THE SECOND

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE TOWN.

BY REV. J. W. ALVORD,

Dec. 22d, 1841.

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HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

THE Address was accompanied by appropriate religious services, introduced by a portion of Scripture from a time worn Bible, which the reader prefaced with the following remarks:—

“I hold in my hands a relic, most interesting, of the period we commemorate. It is an ancient Bible, and was the property of Lt. Francis Bell, one of the first settlers of this place, and now belongs to Miss MERCY BELL, one of his descendants. It contains a record of the birth of the first male child in Stamford, Jonathan Bell, son of Francis Bell, in September, 1641. The Book itself is much older than New England, and, from facts connected with its history, we hazard nothing in saying that it came with the Pilgrim Fathers, and perhaps landed with them from the Mayflower upon the Rock at Plymouth. Let us honour this volume, and receive instruction while we read a portion of its contents.”

The 91st Psalm was then read.

A D D R E S S.

“Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.”
PSALMS, 8th and 9th verses.

THE occasion which has called this assembly together, is one of uncommon occurrence and of uncommon interest. This day is commemorative of events connected with thrilling associations in the bosoms of all who love to trace the history of their homes, and country. *Two hundred years* have now passed away, since the spot we occupy ceased to be an unbroken wilderness, and the step, and song, and prayer, and blows of industry of our fathers fell upon the ear of the savage, and startled from his covert the wild beast of the forest.

They came—and a wilderness was changed into the abode of civilized man. The seeds of civil and religious institutions were planted,

and vigorously they germinated in this soil of freedom. They were watered by the tears of *trial*, and nurtured by the hands of more than paternal solicitude, and we, their children, are now reaping the reward of their sufferings, and enjoying the fruits of their toil in full maturity.

Permit me to advert to the fact that this day commemorates also the landing of our first fathers, "the Puritan Pilgrims," on the Rock of Plymouth, and the recollection of that marked and hallowed event shall make this occasion doubly interesting. We celebrate the birth time, both of New England and one of New England's eldest children—the town of Stamford. We recognize the twenty-second of December as an annual festival, sacred to the memory of the Pilgrims. The Day shall remind us of their undaunted courage; their sufferings; their adventurous enterprise and faith; such as well deserve our recognition and our honour—not now alone, but annually, that event shall be commemorated. But in this *Centennial Anniversary*, we *meet but once*. At its *next* observance our children's children shall assemble, long after the present population of this town, whether old or young, shall have passed together to the grave. Another hundred years will carry us and ours across life's stormy ocean, and land us (*may we trust!*) upon the shores of a better country—our feet on the "ETERNAL ROCK."

We gather around this event, then, with feelings of peculiar interest. It shall be strongly marked upon the tablet of our memory.—We will speak of it when aged, and fix its associations deeply in the recollection of our children. And why should not the origin of a New England township be an event of interest? These municipal associations furnish an anomaly in the history of man. They started into being, and still continue to be, the purest democracies on earth. Their commencement marked at once the beginning of a social community; of a religious congregation, and of a CHURCH OF CHRIST. Then the *township*, and the *parish*, and the *Church*, were almost synonymous terms.

The first parishes of New England were the nurseries, too, of literature and of American liberty. They were the cradle in which was rocked the infant nation, and, I may add, the infant Church. They embodied all the elementary principles of religious, social, and civil order—elements moulded into practical shape, and acted out with vigour, and with the happiest results. Unlike the towns of any other country, they did not derive their origin or privileges *from the State*—the *State* owes its existence and glory to them. They were not, strictly speaking, at first even colonies. Each seems to have been an enfranchised community, exercising all the rights of sovereignty, and so united with the other as to form a model in miniature of a free republic. And when the English government asserted its jurisdiction over them, it was only to assume the "central power" which had been created by a surrender, on the part of each town, of inherent privileges. Although the king then claimed and ruled the country, the *townships* remained, as they were before, and through all subsequent revolutions they have

continued to this day to be, the only source of all political power.*—Our townships are indeed, at this time, subject to the higher legislatures, but we insist upon it that at first they were scarcely dependent upon them,—and it is interesting to remember that they have not been invested with privileges *by* the State, but they seem, on the contrary, to have surrendered to the State, and for *public benefit*, a portion of their independence.

What we have said, then, is true, that “*the first parishes in New England were free democracies*”—nations in embryo! and the principles embodied in their organization, our present Central Government has done well to copy. They were united soon, it is true, in common fellowship, thus giving to themselves republican State existence, and, during a number of their first years, they realized the beautiful sentiment of our country’s present motto, “*E PLURIBUS UNUM.*”

We meet this evening, then, not as a clan to give notoriety to a feudal legend, nor to immortalize a lawless origin, but as a portion of a now great and free people, to honour a noble parentage, and to learn the history of that parentage, and a portion of our country’s history, in the origin of this one of its earliest townships.

Our task is difficult—not to find materials, but in a brief discourse to condense them. Would that this task had been committed to better hands.

I propose to exhibit only such facts as have direct reference to the event which has summoned together this assembly: I need no apology, therefore, for giving a brief detail of what is, to most of you, familiar history.

Religious oppression from the throne of England drove the puritan fathers of this country, first to Holland in the year 1609. They settled at Leyden, and there formed themselves into a Church of Christ, and were permitted to worship God in peace, and with a liberty of conscience which they could not enjoy under the despotic government of king James. The pious and amiable Mr. John Robinson was their pastor. After a few years residence among the hospitable Hollanders, they found that although they were kindly treated, they still laboured under many disadvantages. In the language of COTTON

* We admit that the first settlers of New England acknowledged their allegiance to the king and sought his approbation, yet in practice, and in FACT, they were free sovereignties. They framed their own constitutions of government; named their own magistrates; enacted laws; concluded peace, or declared war, without the assistance, and almost without the knowledge of the mother country—and there was no appeal from their courts, except in cases where their decisions were contrary to English law, the principles of which were then, as now, the basis both of legislative and judicial proceedings. We are sure this was so in the Plymouth Province, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Haven plantations. The Plymouth people came to New England without the guarantee even of a patent, and neither of the above named colonies derived their incorporations from the king, although they did not deny his supremacy. They constituted a society of their own accord, the principles and management of which, were left to their own choice, and “it was not until thirty or forty years afterwards, under Charles II., that their existence was legally recognized by a Royal Charter. [Vid., *Tocqueville*, p. 33; *Hutchinson’s Hist.* p. 209, 243; *Pitkin’s Hist.* p. 42, 47.]

MATHER, "They felt that they were neither for *health*, nor *purse*, nor language well accommodated," but, he adds, "the concern they most of all had, was for *their posterity*. They saw whatever *banks* the Dutch had against the inroads of the sea, they had not sufficient *ones* against a flood of manifold profaneness," and "they found themselves also, under a very strong disposition of zeal to attempt the establishment of *Congregational Churches* in the remote parts of the world, and in hope that they should settle the worship and order of the gospel, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in these regions." Thus, for the sake of still enjoying religious liberty—educating their children, and extending Christ's kingdom, they were willing to leave the abodes of civilization; cross a stormy ocean, and dwell in a distant wilderness.

They left Leyden in two small vessels, (the *Speedwell* and *Mayflower*,) in number, including women and children, about one hundred and fifty. But in a storm which soon followed, the *Speedwell* was found to be unseaworthy, and they were obliged to return. Nothing discouraged, they abandoned that vessel, and as many as were able embarked on board the *Mayflower*.*

I cannot forbear transcribing the affecting account given of the farewell scene, by Nathaniel Morton, the first historian of New England. "So they left that goodly and pleasant city of Leyden, which had been their resting place for above eleven years; but they knew that they were pilgrims and strangers here below, and looked not much on these things, but lifted up their eyes to Heaven, their dearest country, where God had prepared for them a city, and therein quieted their spirits.—When they came to Delfs Haven, they found the ship and all things ready, and such of their friends who could not come with them, followed after them and came from Amsterdam to see them shipped and to take leave of them. One night was spent with little sleep with the most, but with friendly entertainment and Christian discourse, and other real expressions of true Christian love. The next day they went on board and their friends with them, when truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful parting—to hear what sighs, and sobs, and prayers did sound amongst them. What tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each other's heart—that sundry of the Dutch strangers that stood on the quay as spectators could not refrain from tears. But the tide, (which stays for no man,) calling them away that were loth to depart, their Reverend Pastor falling down on his knees, and they all with him, with watery cheeks, commended

* The *Mayflower* was the larger of the two vessels in which the Pilgrims embarked, measuring "nine score tons." Small indeed, compared with the "stately ships" which now plough the Atlantic, and so small that only one hundred and one of the original number could be accommodated on board of her. The same number were landed at Plymouth, one death and one birth having occurred during the voyage. She was afterwards one of the five vessels which in 1629 conveyed Endicott's company to Salem and also one of the fleet which in 1630 brought over the company who settled Boston, Charlestown, Watertown, &c., from whom the people of this place descended.—VID. YOUNG'S CHRONICLES OF THE PILGRIMS.

them with most fervent prayers unto the Lord and his blessings, and then, with mutual embraces and many tears, they took their leaves, one of another, which proved to be the last leave to many of them."

Pilgrims indeed! They left all, even their beloved Pastor. They tore from the embrace of kindred, and at the bidding of God's providence sought, by faith, an unknown country. The vine was plucked away from the parent stock to be transplanted where it could take deeper root.*

After a rough passage, and a lengthy one, they reached the stormy shores of New England, and in the cold winter of 1620—*two hundred and twenty-one years ago, this day!*—they landed on the Rock of Plymouth. That Rock an imperishable relic of their faith and daring enterprise. That humble Rock, "pressed for an instant by the feet of a few pilgrims," shall be remembered when "the gateways of a thousand palaces" are forgotten.

Before they landed, as they had no patent nor charter, for any part of New England, a constitution and form of government was drawn up, John Carver was chosen Governor, and when they stepped on shore, they did it as a civil and religious community, fully organized. What impressive testimony to their love of order, and of the control of law, as well as of Gospel ordinances.†

I will not attempt to narrate at length the hardships of these **FIRST SETTLERS**. It is known probably, to all, that before the end of that inclement winter, one half of this heroic band had perished. Shelterless, (for their first house was burned to the ground,) surrounded by savages; distressed by famine, disease rapidly swept their freezing bodies to the grave. I hasten to say, that owing to the increased and continued religious oppression in England, small companies of the persecuted continued, for the next ten years, to flee for refuge to the asylum found in New England.

In 1625, Charles 1st having succeeded to the throne with the bigoted William Laud for his adviser, a series of oppressive steps were

* Mr. Robinson never came to America. His son Mr. Isaac Robinson came, and was one of the early settlers in the Plymouth colony. From him descended the mother of the younger Jonathan Trumbull, who in 1798 was elected Governor of this State.—VID. BACON'S HIST. DISCOURSES.

† The Pilgrims had intended to locate at the mouth of the Hudson River, and for that region their patent was granted: but the Dutch captain was bribed by his countrymen (who claimed that country) to carry them farther north. This added to their afflictions. They found themselves betrayed and exposed to an unknown coast—ignorant of any harbour—the country looking barren, and covered with a dreary inhospitable wilderness. They made the land on the 9th of November, and continued "beating off and on" until the 22d December, before they could find a suitable place to land. No one but a sailor knows how bleak, and cold, and terrible is the approach to our stormy coast at this season of the year. The winds are almost constantly "off-shore," and boisterous. Every wave throws over the vessel a sheet of ice, until it becomes so loaded with the accumulated mass, the rigging so frozen and icy, and the crew so benumbed that to save themselves and vessel from perishing they are frequently obliged to run back into a warmer latitude and "thaw out." If such is the exposure of vessels on this coast now, what must have been the situation of the *Mayflower* during those perilous forty-three days in the winter of 1620?

commenced, which terminated at length in the famous "act of uniformity."*

In 1629, Endicott and his company came and settled at Salem.—The next year a large and well furnished reinforcement arrived at Charlestown, near Boston, under the illustrious Winthrop and Sir Richard Saltonstall. All these suffered severely in common with the first settlers at Plymouth, from comfortless houses, bad food, and with most distressing sickness and death. Of the one hundred who came with Mr. Endicott, *eighty* were in their graves before Winthrop and Saltonstall arrived, and from their company so many in a short time fell sick, that the well were not sufficient to attend them and bury their dead.—*Vid Trumbull's His. vol. I., page 8 and 9.*

It is now my purpose to trace these settlements to this town.

SALTONSTALL and his company located at Watertown, near Boston, and Mr. PHILIPS, from the county of Essex, England, was their minister. At this time Boston and Watertown were the two largest places in the country—each having about sixty families, and such numbers continued to emigrate, that these two towns, and some others began to be straightened for want of room.

In 1633, a small company from Plymouth having prepared the frame of a house, with boards and materials for covering it, embarked on board a vessel bound for Connecticut. They sailed up Connecticut River, and although the Dutch who had come in before them attempted to prevent their design, they went on to Windsor and erected their house. This, Gov. Woolcott says, was the first house built in Connecticut, although about the same time the Dutch erected a trading house at Hartford which they called the "Hirse of Good Hope."

In 1634, "some of the Watertown people came to Connecticut and erected a few huts at 'Pyquag,' now Wethersfield, in which a small number made shift to pass the winter." Others followed in the spring. This, Dr. Trumbull states to be the tradition, and the Rev. Mr. Meeks of Wethersfield, in his manuscripts says, "Wethersfield is the oldest town on the river."

The next summer they made such improvements as they could, and in the fall began to remove their families and property in order to make a permanent settlement. It appears that the men who first came to Hartford and Windsor united with the Wethersfield people

* This act was passed on the restoration of Charles II., in 1662. By it about 2000 clergymen were ejected from their livings. The act required among other things, that every clergyman in the kingdom should be re-ordained, (even if he had before received Episcopal ordination)—assent to every thing contained in the Liturgy of the established Church—take the oath of canonical obedience—abjure "the solemn league and covenant" and renounce the principle of ever taking arms against the king. Thus all the royal promises of toleration and indulgence were eluded and broken. This body of clergymen, whose consciences forbade their subscribing to this act, had formed a most respectable portion of the piety and talent of the English Church. Among them were such men as Baxter, and Bunyan, and Bates, and Howe—men of the same spirit with the Wickliffs, and Luthers, and Cranmers, and Latimers of a former reformation.

in this removal. On the 15th of October about sixty men, women, and children, with their horses, cattle, and swine commenced their journey from Massachusetts through the woods to Connecticut River. "After a tedious and difficult journey through swamps and rivers, over mountains and a rough country, (one unbroken forest,) which they passed with great difficulty and fatigue, they arrived safely at their places of destination."—*Vid. Trum.*

"They were so long on the journey, and so much time and pains were spent in passing the river, and in getting over their cattle, that, after all their exertions, winter came upon them before they were prepared. This was an occasion of great distress and damage to the plantation. The winter set in this year much earlier than usual, and the weather was stormy and severe. By the 15th of November the Connecticut was frozen over and the snow was so deep, and the season so tempestuous, that a considerable number of the cattle which had been driven on from Massachusetts could not be brought over the river. The people had so little time to prepare their houses, and to erect shelters for their cattle, that the sufferings of man and beasts were extreme. Indeed the hardships and distress of the first planters of Wethersfield, as well as of other towns on the river, scarcely admit of a description. To carry much provision or furniture through a pathless wilderness was impossible. Their principal provisions and household furniture were, therefore, put on board of several small vessels, which, by reason of delays and the tempestuousness of the season, were either cast away or did not arrive. By the last of Nov. they began to be in want, and famine and death looked the inhabitants sternly in the face. Some of them, driven by hunger, attempted their way in this severe season of the year, through the woods back to Massachusetts. Of thirteen in one company, who made this attempt, one in passing the river fell through the ice and was drowned. The other twelve were ten days on their journey, and would have all perished, had it not been for the assistance of the Indians." In another company, a number were frozen to death before they could reach their friends. Indeed, such was the distress in general, that by the 3d or 4th of December, a considerable part of the new settlers were forced to abandon their habitations. Seventy persons, men, women, and children, were obliged, in the extremity of winter, to go down to the mouth of the river to meet their provisions, as the only means of saving themselves from starvation. Not meeting with the vessel as they expected, they all went on board of the Rebecca, a small craft of about 60 tons, in which, with extreme difficulty, and in a famishing state, they succeeded in reaching Boston.

The people who remained at their stations after all the help they were able to obtain, by hunting, and from the Indians, were obliged to subsist on grain, malt, and acorns. "It is difficult," says the historian, "to describe, or even to conceive the apprehensions or distresses of the people in the circumstances of our venerable ances-

tors during this doleful winter. All the horrors of a dreary wilderness spread themselves around them. They were compassed with numerous fierce and cruel tribes of wild and savage men. They had neither bread for themselves nor children, nor clothing suitable for the season. Whatever emergency might happen, they were cut off both by land and water from any succor or retreat."

What energy! what a spirit of endurance! and what *faith* must have nerved and sustained this company of adventurers equally heroic with the Plymouth Pilgrims, who, as we shall find, were the ancestors of this town, and the first permanent settlers of Connecticut.

The minister of the Wethersfield people (Mr. Williams,) did not remove with them, and after some time they chose Mr. Henry Smith, who had been admitted to office in England, for their pastor. Their town appears to have prospered, although not so large as either Hartford or Windsor, and at the period of which we speak, these three places, including the fort built by the younger Winthrop at Saybrook, contained about eight hundred inhabitants.

On the 26th of April, 1336, the first General Court in Connecticut was held at Newtown, (now Hartford.) It consisted of six magistrates, among whom was ANDREW WARD, afterwards one of the first settlers of Stamford.*

In 1638, Quinnippiac, (New Haven,) was purchased and settled by Theophilus Eaton, Rev. John Davenport, and others. Mr. Davenport had been a famous minister in the city of London, and was distinguished for piety, learning, and sound judgment. The male branch of his family subsequently settled at Stamford. His grandson, and at that time his only male descendent, was the third minister of this Church, a great-grandson of whom is now one of its deacons.

On the 14th of January, 1639, a Constitution of Government was formed for the Colony of Connecticut. To do this, all the free planters assembled at Hartford, and after mature deliberation they introduced their Constitution with a declaration of sentiments, a portion of which, to show the spirit of our fathers, we will transcribe:

"Forasmuch as it has pleased the Almighty God, by the wise dispensation of His Divine Providence so to order and dispose of things, that we, the inhabitants of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield, are dwelling in and upon the river of Connecticut and the lands thereto adjoining," &c. Then follows their reasons for thus associating into one public State, or Commonwealth: "*to maintain the liberty and purity of the Gospel;*" "*the discipline of the churches according to its institution;*" and "*in all civil affairs to be governed by such laws as should be made agreeably to the Constitution which they were then about to adopt.*"

* The Legislative and Judicial functions were exercised at this time by the same body; and so far as individuals were concerned, they were not separated until 1784. By an act passed in May of that year the office of the Superior Court was declared to be incompatible with a seat in the Legislature of this State or of the United States. — *Third State Rec., May Session, 1784, page 9.*

Then follows the Constitution, and whoever reads it must say, with Dr. Trumbull, "that it is one of the most free and happy Constitutions of civil government which has ever been formed. The adoption of it at so early a period, when the light of liberty was wholly darkened, in most parts of the earth, and the rights of men so little understood in others, does great honor to their ability, integrity, and love of mankind. To posterity, indeed, it exhibits a most benevolent regard, and the happy consequences of it, which the people of Connecticut for more than two centuries have experienced, are without description." The Charter of Charles II., in 1662,* and the Constitution of this State, of 1818, agree with it in all the fundamental principles of Government, and differ from it only in their greater extension and adaptation to an increased and varied population.

In 1640, New Haven made a purchase of all the lands at Rippowams, (the Indian name of Stamford, †) by their agent, Capt. Nathan-

* The noble charter granted to this state, by Charles II., was more liberal than any given to the other states. It did not abridge the privileges of the townships in the least. They were still to choose their town and state officers as before, and to manage all their internal affairs. Nor did it take from the people the liberty of electing their Chief Magistrate, and of making ultimate decisions in their Courts. It sanctioned the choice of the people, and clothed the magistrates who were elected with authority. It also gave them the privilege of appealing to the king in case of war or other interference of foreign nations for protection. Unsuccessful attempts were more than once made to wrest from us this valuable charter. Its famous retreat to the Oak Tree, at Hartford, when pursued by Sir Edmond Andross, in 1687, is too well known to need repeating. Again in 1715, it was attacked in the British Parliament, and only saved from repeal by the well known and able defence of Mr. Dummer, agent of the Colony. Although, on account of the fullness of its privileges, it was ever after the object of the all grasping ambition of the mother country, yet it continued to be "*de facto*" the Constitution of this State during all the subsequent changes in the British Government, through the revolutionary struggle, and down to the adoption of the new Constitution in 1818, a period of more than 150 years.

† The etymology of this Indian name cannot now be ascertained. Like most if not all the proper names of the aborigines of this country, it was probably significant, and designated some prominent feature in the locality of the place, and was (according to the Indian custom) coined expressly for that purpose. Our fathers in changing the name called the town after Stamford in England, which place was doubtless the former residence of some of them. This was a common practice with the fathers of New England—much as they had suffered, and bitterly as they had been persecuted, they still cherished the remembrance of their former homes with delight, and loved to perpetuate their endeared names in the new settlements. A brief sketch therefore of the place from which our ancestors originated may not be uninteresting :

Stamford in England is a very ancient town and borough of Lincolnshire, about 90 miles from London. It is pleasantly situated on the Welland River, which is navigable to this place by boats and barges, and over which it had a stone bridge with five arches. It was anciently called Stanford—"Stan" Saxon, for "Stone," and we find it sometimes written Stanford in our first town records. Its original Latin name however was *Durobrevia*, which, like Stanford, signified a hard, shelly crossing place, or ford. Here the Romans crossed or forded the river pre-

iel Turner. At this time there were several tribes of Indians, who dwelt upon and owned these lands. Their precise number cannot

vious to the building of their bridge. The place was surrounded by walls, and secured by gates, at a very early period. Some writers tell us that they had a University there, long before the Romans invaded the Island—but this is somewhat improbable. Mr. Neal however produces a manuscript by which it appears that a University was founded there before our Saviour's time, which continued until the year 300, and was dissolved by the Pope for adhering to Arius. There was, without doubt, a College in Stamford in the reign of Edward III. Dr. Ayliff, in his history of the University of Oxford, says, that "there was a rupture at Oxford in 1331, when many of the scholars left and went to the College in Stamford," which College he adds, "had been founded by a secession from the University at Cambridge. It contained at one time more than 200 students. At the present time the remains of two Colleges are found there, called "Black Hall" and "Brazen Nose," over the gateway of the last there is a brazen nose and a ring through it, from which one of the Colleges at Oxford took pattern. Roman antiquities are still found about Stamford, and there are the remains of one of their highways, which runs through a part of the town.

Soon after the Romans left the Island, in the year 426, the Picts and Caledonians penetrated as far as Stamford, laying the whole country waste, with fire and sword. But the Britons having invited over the Saxons to their assistance, a most bloody battle was fought at this place, between Edward IV., and the Earl of Warwick. Edward was victorious, and the Highlanders were again driven to the fastnesses of their mountains—ten thousand men were slain. It was called "*The Battle of Lose Coat Field*," for the very quaint reason that the enemy fled, with such haste, that they threw away their coats.

Edward, the elder, built a castle here about the year 900, of which no trace now remains. Stow, the English historian, says there was a mint here in the year 930, under the reign of Athelstan, and succeeding kings greatly favored the town. Here the Barons met to levy war against king John, and in his reign here was the first bull-baiting. As showing the taste of this feudal and semi-barbarous age, we will give the origin of this cruel custom. William, earl of Warren, and lord of Stamford, observed one day two bulls fighting in the castle meadow, and that all the butchers' dogs in the town alarmed at their bellowing ran together and singling out one of them, pursued it furiously through the borough. Lord William was so delighted with the spectacle, that he gave all the meadow to the butchers for a common, on condition that they should find a mad bull six weeks before Christmas, yearly, for the continuance of the sport; from which arose the proverb, "As mad as the baiting bull of Stamford."

In the latter part of the 9th century, this place was burnt by the Danes, but it appears to have been soon rebuilt; for we find that king Stephen in the former part of the 10th century found it of great importance during his wars with the Empress Matilda; and to prevent its falling into her hands, he built a strong castle, some remains of which are still to be seen. Stamford at one time had 14 parish Churches, a number of which are yet standing. Cecil, Lord Burleigh, was buried in one of them, (St. Martin's) in a handsome tomb. In the Church near the stone bridge is a fine monument of the Earl and Countess of Exeter, in white marble, with their figures cumbent as large as life, done at Rome.

The modern town is large, handsome, and populous, with a flourishing trade, and having several good streets and many elegant buildings. At a distance of one mile from the Borough is "*Burleigh House*," the magnificent seat of the Marquis of Exeter, formerly the residence of Lord Burleigh, treasurer to Queen Elizabeth. As early as the beginning of the 16th century, Stamford was noted as a spot where puritan principles had taken deep root. Henry Grey, of Grooby, Earl of Stamford, and patron of the Borough, was a General in the service of the

now be ascertained. But the Stamford Indians are often stated to have been "numerous," and "formidable." The two principal Sachems were Ponus, sagamore of Toquamske, and Wascussee, sagamore of Shippan. The purchase deed, dated July first, 1640, purports that all the ground belonging to the above named Chiefs, "except a piece to plant on," (which afterwards appears to have been twenty acres,) was conveyed to Mr. Turner. The early record of this transaction is as follows :

"Bought of Ponus, sagamore of Toquams, and of Wascussee, sagamore of Shippan, by *mee*, Nathaniel Turner, of Quenepiocke, all the grounds that belong to both the above said sagamores, except a piece of ground which the above said sagamore of Toquams reserved for his and the rest of said Indians to plant on—all of which ground being expressed by meadows, upland, grass, with the rivers, and trees; and in consideration hereof, I, the said Nathaniel Turner, *amm* to give and bring, or send, to the above said sagamores, within the space of one month, twelve coats, twelve *howes*, twelve hatchets, twelve glasses, twelve knives, four kettles, four fathom of white wampum: all of which lands *bothe* we, the said sagamores, do promise faithfully to perform, both for ourselves, heirs, executors, or assigns, and hereunto we have *sett* our marks in the presence of many of the said Indians, they fully consenting thereto."

Signed by the marks of Ponus and Wascussee, and witnessed by two Indians. William Wilkes and James ——. Also signed by the mark of Owenoke Sagamore, Ponus' son, and another Sagamore, name not legible.

puritan, or long Parliament, which Charles I. tried in vain to dissolve, and which lasted eighteen years: and in 1641 we find that the Earl was opposing the King with an army composed of all the forces of Dorset, Somerset, and Devon. After the restoration therefore of Charles II., the place was made to suffer most severely. At least three clergymen were ejected from their livings, (Rev. Edward Brown, Rev. John Richardson, and Rev. Joseph Cawthorn,) most valuable and excellent men, and the flocks to which they had ministered, were left without the bread of life. Thus persecuted, the people fled from their country, and many came to America; some of whom were at length led, in the providence of God, to Rippowams, where they laid the foundation of a new Stamford, a spot where they and their children might enjoy the liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences.

It is pleasant to know that up to the present time, the parent place in England, has several churches in which the protestant dissenters still worship.

See Rapin's His. Eng., folio ed., A.D., 1783, vol. I., p. 607, and vol. II., p. 489. Dalton's English Traveller, folio, A. D., 1794, p. 413. Rees's Cyclopædia.—Kernsley's Guide, p. 49., Collier's Hist. and Bio. Dic., folio, vol. II., and Nonconformist Memorial, vol. II., p. 430.

There is another place in England called Stamford Bridge, on the river Derwent, about ten miles in a northeasterly direction from York. There also a celebrated battle was fought in the reign of Harold II., about the year 1066, called the "battle of Stamford Bridge." This place and battle should not therefore be confounded with those described above.

The marks of these Chiefs are expressive of the Indian emblems of terror and power, and by which their head men wished to be represented. One mark imitates a war club. That of Wascussee a bow and arrow. The mark of Ponus is like a shaft or streak of lightning, and that of Owenokee is similar. Under the signatures, on the Town Record, is an entry of "12 glasses, 12 knives, and four coats received in part payment." Other deeds were afterwards given, explaining and confirming the above.*

This tract of land includes the present town of Darien and Stamford, some part of Greenwich, New Canaan, and the southern part of Poundridge. Ponus, one of the two elder Chiefs, resided about seven miles from the sea-shore, at a place still known as "Ponus Street," in the western part of New Canaan; and Wascussee, or Wescus, as he was commonly called, lived at a place now known by the name of "Wescott," on the shore east of Shippan, and his tribe owned all the lands along the Sound for some miles, including Shippan Point.

It may seem strange to us that these Indians should be willing to sell all these valuable lands for such a trifle—the whole amount being only about thirty-three pounds sterling—less than one hundred and fifty dollars for a quantity of land not less than one hundred and

* One of the subsequent deeds we will copy, it gives more clearly than the first the boundaries of the tract of land which was thereby conveyed. The reason why it became necessary to obtain this was that the Indians claimed they did not understand the first agreement as conveying to the Whites the entire possession of their lands. They said that "the inhabitants encroached upon their rights," and that when they sold their land "they did not expect the purchasers were to *settle houses* upon it," and they claimed, moreover, that the Englishman's hogs destroyed the Indian's corn.

In the year 1655 the following agreement was therefore drawn up and signed by the parties:

"Our agreement made with Ponus, Sagamore of Toquams, and with Onox, his eldest son: Although there was an agreement made before with the said Indians and Captain Turner, and the purchase paid for, yet the things not being clear and being very unsatisfied, we come to another agreement with Onox and Ponus for their land from the town plot of Stamford north about 16 miles, and there we marked a white oak tree with S. T., and going towards the Mill River side we marked another white oak tree with S. T., and from that tree west we were to run four miles, and from the first marked tree to run four miles eastward, and from this east and west line we are to have further to the north for our cattle to feed, full two miles further, the full breadth—only the said Indians reserve for themselves liberty of their planting ground; and the above said Indians, Ponus and Onox, with all other Indians that be concerned in it, have surrendered all the said land to the town of Stamford, as their proper right, forever; and the aforesaid Indians have set their hands as witnessing the truth hereof, and for and in consideration hereof, the said town of Stamford is to give the said Indians four coats, which the Indians did accept of for full satisfaction for the aforesaid lands, although it was paid before: hereby Ponus' posterity is cut off from making any claim or having any right to any part of the aforesaid land, and do hereby surrender and make over, for us and any of ours forever, unto the Englishmen of the town of Stamford, and their posterity forever, the land as it is butted and bounded, the bounds above mentioned. The said Ponus and Onox,

twenty-eight square miles : and more especially as they did not intend to remove from the place, for, so far as we know, these Chiefs with all their people lived and died in or near this village. But the Indians were entirely ignorant of what the effect of civilization would be, and they wished to occupy these grounds only for hunting, which when it was not cultivated they were still permitted to do. And the fact also illustrates the improvidence of the "red man," as well as the faith which at first he had in the integrity of the "white stranger."

We now come directly to the question, how and by whom was Stamford settled ?

The Church at Wethersfield removing from Watertown, in Massachusetts, without their pastor, and for some time having no settled ministry, "fell into unhappy contentions and animosities." This state of things at length seemed so much to alienate and divide its members, that, at the advice of Mr. Davenport, of New Haven, the *minority* were induced to remove to Stamford, and their agents obtained on their behalf a conveyance of the right of New Haven to all the lands purchased by Mr. Turner, of the Indians at Rippowams, upon the following conditions :

1. The Wethersfield men were to give the price paid to the Indians for the land, by Mr. Turner.
2. A fifth part of the lands were to be reserved to be disposed of, by the Court, to such other settlers as they saw fit.
3. They were to join with the New Haven plantation in the form of government there adopted.

his son, having this day received of Richard Law four coats, acknowledging themselves fully satisfied for the aforesaid land.

Witness the said Indians the day and date hereof, Stamford, August 15, 1665.

PONUS, his X mark.
ONOX, his X mark.

Witnesses, Wm. Newman, Richard Lewis."

On the 7th of Jan., 1667, another and still more positive and full agreement was made for the same lands signed by Taphanse and Powahay, and on behalf of Stamford by

RICHARD LAW.
JONATHAN SELLECK.
FRANCIS BELL.
GEORGE SLAUSON.
JOHN HOLLY.

Done in presence of
RICHARD BEACH,
JOHN EMBREY,
SAML. MILLS.

Besides these deeds there was a conveyance made by Sagamore Piamikee, of a small piece of land lying near Five Mile River, which was to be annexed to the plantation of Stamford. For this they "*did give unto the said Sagamore, one coat in the presence of George Slauson; and after that three more coats, with some quantity of TOBACCO.*"

4. *Twenty men* were to settle in Stamford by the last of November, 1641.

Under this agreement some of the Wethersfield men came on to Stamford in the spring of 1641, and before the end of that year "30 or 40 families were established." We cannot give the names of all the first settlers of this town, as the ancient records are much dilapidated and in some parts quite illegible, but so far as can be ascertained, they were Rev. Richard Denton, Lieutenant Francis Bell, Nathaniel Weed, Joseph Bishop, Capt. John Underhill, Andrew Ward, Jonas Wood, John and Francis Holly, Thurston Raynor, Matthew Mitchell, Robert Coc, Richard Guildersleeve, George Slauson, Richard Law, William Newman, and Jonathan Selleck. An honorable company, though the names of some of them are forgotten. Mr. Mitchell is said in history to have been a "capital man." Mr. Raynor was a delegate from Wethersfield to the first General Assembly under Gov. Haynes. Richard Law was also a prominent man in the Colony and a magistrate of the town—his name often appears in the discussion in regard to the union of New Haven with Connecticut, to which he was at first strongly opposed. Mr. Ward was one of the Judges of the first Court held in New Haven, in 1636. Mr. Bell was on the "committee of five," appointed to consummate a union between the Connecticut and the New Haven Colonies, in 1664, and tradition says, that John and Francis Holly and Francis Bell came originally from Plymouth, and were among the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower*.*

A number of these pioneers of Stamford were among the most influential of the Wethersfield men, and the historian of Connecticut, after naming Raynor, Mitchell, and Ward, among others who were the chief men of Connecticut, says, "They were the civil and religious fathers of the Colony. They assisted in forming its free and happy constitution—were among its legislators, and some of the chief pillars of the Church and Commonwealth, and they, with many others of the same excellent character employed their abilities and their estates for the prosperity of the Colony." They were among the earliest inhabitants of New England, coming, as we have seen, through Wethersfield from Watertown, in Massachusetts, and from that noted company who came over with John Winthrop and Sir Richard Saltonstall.

They fled from the intolerant spirit which produced the "act of uniformity" in England, and even the second time they left their homes and fled from, what *they thought*, was religious intolerance at Wethersfield. These men were puritans—a name despised, in generations past, but to be better understood in the present, and honored in the future. True, they lived in a sterner age than this, and coming hither to establish a

* This tradition, there is some reason to doubt, as neither the name of Holly or Bell appears among the signers of the constitution drawn up on board that vessel. It is most likely that they came over in the *Mayflower* on her second voyage, in the fleet that brought Winthrop and Saltonstall's company, in 1630.

religious colony, they made laws for its protection. They came to this country smarting from that legislation which would give them no protection at home, and it was their intention to guard their religious interests. They acted consistently, and did so by the best means with which they were acquainted. Exposed as they had been, and still expected to be, such laws, in that age, and in their circumstances, exhibited wisdom. They, moreover, interfered with the rights of no one, for the lands they purchased were their own, and no one out of the Colony had a right to complain of their legislation, much less was any one obliged to become a member of their community. Charged with bigotry by their enemies, it is still true, that in all the principles of religious toleration, they were in advance of any nation then on earth. But does it become me to analyze and seek a defence for the character of these men? Time forbids, and you, their children, do not need nor require it. Their unadorned biography shall bear honorable testimony to their sterling worth, and this fair country which they planted, with its institutions, shall be their eulogy. The noble object which brought them hither shall dignify them among the brave and generous, and give them reverence among the lovers of religion and of liberty. *Call* them Puritans! for we revere the name—men, who could abandon all that was dear to them in Europe, and come to the wilds of America, not for the object of trade, not for worldly emolument, but for the holy purposes of religion; the liberty of conscience; the unrestrained worship and ordinances of God, and the free exercise of the elective franchise.—*Puritanism*, then, we love and venerate. May it ever be New England's watchword, and the badge of her nobility. Were it necessary for me to add to the praise of our ancestors, I would quote the language of a late eminent French author, who, of course, cannot be charged with undue prejudice in favor of either puritan liberty, or puritan religion.—Hear him in a few sentences:

“They did not cross the Atlantic to improve their situation, or increase their wealth.—The call which summoned them from the comforts of their homes was purely intellectual, and in facing the inevitable sufferings of exile, their object was the triumph of an idea. Puritanism was not merely a religious doctrine—it corresponded in many points with the most absolute democratic and republican theories. It was *this* tendency which aroused its most dangerous adversaries. It was scarcely less a political than a religious sentiment, and no sooner had the emigrants landed on this barren coast, than a democracy started into full size and panoply, more perfect than antiquity had dreamed of. “Puritanism was the result of two distinct elements—the spirit of Religion and the spirit of Liberty. In America, religion is the road to knowledge, and the observance of Divine Laws leads man to civil freedom.”—*De Tocqueville*.

Ingenious testimony, and from a disinterested witness, to the spirit of our fathers, and to the spirit of that religion, and of those institu-

tions which, *with their name*, they have bequeathed to us ! I congratulate their congregated posterity around me this evening, in the honored possession of the generous and noble legacy !

Such were the ancestors of this town and village. Through their influence, even before the close of the 16th century, Stamford was called by the historian "a notable town," and its name has frequent and honorable mention in the records of the New Haven Colony.

Allow me now to pursue a few moments longer the local history of this place.

In celebrating the first settlement of Stamford, we commemorate also the institution here of the Church of Christ. This Congregational Church is coeval with the settlement of the town. The Parish Records, as we find, for more than a century were kept in connection with those of the township, and the prosperity, and, indeed, the existence of the one was intimately connected with the organization and existence of the other. How many members composed the Church at its commencement we cannot tell, but probably it contained nearly all the adults of the place, and as it was formed on the plan of the New Haven Church, it included necessarily all the freemen.

Its early spirituality was such as could be found only among the Pilgrims. RICHARD DENTON was its first pastor. He came with those who removed from Wethersfield, and was a man of piety and talent. He was installed in 1641. Cotton Mather gives the following quaint, though graphic description of him. "Our *pious and learned Mr. Richard Denton*, a *Yorkshire* man, who, having watered *Halifax*, in *England*, with his fruitful ministry, was, by a tempest, then hurried into *New England*, where, first at *Wethersfield*, and then at *Stamford*, his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.—Though he were a *little man*, yet he had a *great soul* ; his well-accomplished mind, in his lesser body, was an *Iliad* in a *nut-shell*.—I think he was blind of an eye ; nevertheless he was not the least among the *seers* of our *Israel* ; he saw a very considerable portion of those things which *eye hath not seen*. He was far from cloudy in his conceptions and principles of Divinity ; whereof he wrote a *system*, entitled, *Soliliquia Sacra* ; so accurately considering the fourfold state of man.—1st, in his *Created Purity*. 2d. *Contracted Deformity*. 3d. *Restored Beauty*. And 4th. *Celestial Glory*, that judicious persons, who have seen it, very much lament the *churches* being so much deprived of it. At length he got into heaven beyond *clouds*, and so beyond *storms* ; waiting the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, *in the clouds of heaven*, when he will have his *reward* among the *saints*."

Such is the description given of the first minister of this people, by one of his cotemporaries. A eulogy strongly expressed, yet doubtless well deserved. Mr. Denton labored only three or four years at

Stamford, when he removed to Hempsted, Long Island, with a number of his church, and subsequently to Essex, England, where he died.*

Rev. JOHN BISHOP succeeded Mr. Denton. To show the value which the church placed, in that age, upon the regular ministrations of the Gospel, I will state the method of making out the call to Mr. Bishop. Hearing he was in the neighborhood of Boston, two brethren, George Slason and Francis Bell, were deputed to go to Boston, and if he was to be found to make known to him the wishes of the Church—Although the country was full of hostile Indians, they went on foot carrying their provisions, and succeed at length in finding Mr. Bishop “to the east-

* It has been stated, in the printed records of the Congregational Church in this town, that Mr. Denton died at Hempsted. This is a mistake. He returned to England in the year 1658, and spent the remainder of his life at Essex. His Epitaph is in Latin, of which the following is a free translation :

“ Here sleeps the dust of RICHARD DENTON ;

“ O'er his low peaceful grave bends

“ The perennial Cypress, fit emblem

“ Of his unfading fame.

“ On Earth

“ His bright example, *religious light* !

“ Shone forth o'er multitudes.

“ In Heaven

“ His pure rob'd spirit shines

“ Like an effulgent star.”

As Mr. Denton was the leader of those men who founded Stamford, and whose character and history have been so little known, we beg leave to subjoin the following facts. He was settled in a useful ministry at Coley Chapel, Halifax, England, about seven years. Times were sharp ; the Bishops being then in their might. In his time came out the “ Book for Sports on the Sabbath Days.” He saw that he could not do what was therein required ; feared further persecution, and therefore took the opportunity of going into New England ; and not without sufficient reason, for this book declared it to be “ His Majesty's pleasure, for his good people's recreations, that after the end of Divine service they should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations : such as dancing, either of men or women ; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any such harmless recreations ; or having of May games, &c ; withal, prohibiting all unlawful games from being used *except on Sundays*, as bear-baiting, bull-baiting,” &c.—For refusing to encourage the breaking of the Sabbath by reading this book, several other clergymen were suspended from office.

The cause of Mr. Denton's leaving Stamford is not entered upon record. He differed with the Church at Wethersfield, on the subject of Church government. It appears that his views on that subject were very much in advance of the age in which he lived. He could not have been in favor of the New Haven doctrine, that none but Free Burgesses, (Church Members) should vote in town meetings, because both Mr. Denton and his Church, at Hempsted, not only allowed every inhabitant to vote, but even made it a duty for all so to do. How many removed from Stamford to Hempsted with Mr. Denton, does not appear, but it is probable that Mr. Raynor, Mr. Guildersleeve, Mr. Wood, and other families went with him, as their names are still numerous in that place.

See Heywood's Memoir, F. B. Thompson's Hist., L. I., and Woodbridge's Historical Discourses.

ward of Boston." He accepted the call and returned with them on foot, bringing his Bible under his arm, through the wilderness, to Stamford. (This Bible is still in the possession of Mr. Noah Bishop, one of his descendants.) Mr. Bishop labored here in the ministry nearly *fifty years*, and died in 1693.

After Mr. Bishop, came Rev. JOHN DAVENPORT. He was ordained in 1694, and was a grandson, and the only male descendant of Rev. John Davenport of New Haven, and from whom he received one of the most valuable libraries at that time in New England. Mr. Davenport graduated at Cambridge College, in 1686, and was justly esteemed for his piety and learning. He died February 5, 1731, in the 36th year of his ministry. His descendants have been prominent men in this Church, each generation of whom has furnished one of its Deacons.

They have also been active and efficient members of the community, and some of them have risen to places of high and important trust in the State.

The next minister in order was Rev. EBENEZER WRIGHT—he was ordained in May, 1732, and died in May, 1746, and is said to have been a powerful preacher. Rev. NOAH WELLES, D. D., succeeded Mr. Wright. He graduated at Yale College, was afterwards tutor in that College, and was considered one of the most eminent scholars and divines of his day, and untiring in his zeal as a pastor. He was ordained December 31, 1746, and died December 31, 1776—his useful ministry, having continued just *thirty years*.*

Rev. JOHN AVERY, whom many can recollect, followed Dr. Welles, and was ordained January 16, 1782. He endeared himself to his people, by his eminent piety, amiable disposition, and the deep interest he manifested in their temporal and spiritual welfare. He died in September, 1791.

On June 13, 1793, the Rev. DANIEL SMITH, the present pastor of this Church, was installed. Mr. Smith is a lineal descendant of Lt. Francis Bell, one of the first settlers of the town. He graduated at Yale College, and pursued theological studies with the Rev. John Cot-

* The following is a copy of Dr. Welles's acceptance of the call of the Society, found on a slip of paper among the town records, in his own beautiful handwriting.

"*To the First Church and Society in Stamford.*—BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—Upon the application of your Committee to me intimating the call you have given me to the work of the ministry among you, I have taken the matter into consideration, and after mature deliberation, and seeking proper direction and advice, your invitation appears to be the call of Divine Providence. Therefore, depending upon the promised presence and assistance of the Great Head of the Church to direct me, and carry me through the many difficulties that, (especially at this day) attend this great and weighty work, I consent to settle in the ministry among you, and accept of your proposals for my temporal support therein, and I desire your Clerk to make an entry of this in your book of Record, as a ratification of the consent on my part. Stamford, 29th Dec., 1746. N. WELLES."

ton Mather Smith, of Sharon, and has now been the regular pastor of this Church, but a few months short of *forty-nine years*. Long may he yet continue the spiritual guide, and counsellor of this people, and at last may he find many stars in his crown of glory.*

Thus, through seven generations of ministers, most of whom lived to a good old age, has God been worshipped at this altar. The third century has now commenced since it was erected by those holy and venerated men, Denton, and Bell, and Slason, and Holly, and Raynor, and others of kindred spirit. Erected with prayers, and tears, and difficulty, and watched over by them with the most anxious solicitude, and may we not suppose that their sainted spirits now look down to see how their children guard this altar and watch with tender interest, as they worship at its shrine?

This Church has enjoyed the labors of stated pastors *one hundred and ninety years*, and the remaining *ten years* are made up of here and there an interruption occasioned by the death of a pastor or the troubles of the revolutionary war. At the time of Dr. Welles's death, in 1776, war had been declared and hostilities commenced. The country was in such an unsettled state that it was impossible to procure a pastor, and the pulpit was supplied by different individuals until 1782. Among others, Dr. Samuel Hopkins, who was driven from his people at Newport, R. Island, preached here for sometime, and it will be interesting also to state, that about the year 1746, the apostolic George Whitfield was here, publishing as he was wont to do, the everlasting Gospel.

All the ministers of this Church, if we except the first and the present pastor, have lived and died among their people. Powerful revivals in days past have been repeatedly witnessed. Harmony and peace have always existed, and the Consociation has never been called upon to settle any difficulties between any of its pastors and the Church, or any of its members.

Such is the brief history of this Zion. It struggled in early times with difficulties, which now would be thought wholly insurmountable. But the spirit of our Fathers carried them through it all. They were exposed to a loose and corrupt emigration. From their frontier position they were troubled, not only by the hostilities of the Dutch, but to all the gross immoralities for which that people in this region were noted.†

* Rev. J. W. ALVORD, was installed Associate Pastor of this Church with the Rev. Mr. Smith, on the sixteenth of March last. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Hall of Norwalk.—Charge by the Rev. Mr. Wilcox, North Greenwich.—Fellowship of the Churches by the venerable pastor, Rev. Mr. Smith.—Address to the Church and Society by the Rev. T. Smith, of New Canaan.

† The boundary between the English and Dutch settlements were for many years undefined. After Stamford was settled, the Dutch demanded jurisdiction over all the country west of the Connecticut River. The New Haven colony, on the other hand claimed by their patent, and by purchase, the lands as far as to include the present town of Greenwich. In 1650 the line was fixed by arbiters between New Haven and the Dutch, a copy of one of which is as follows :

They were surrounded by, and mingled with heathen Indians, who, although they had some noble traits, were yet "sunk in the lowest state of moral turpitude," and for many years, ferocious and hostile. Add to these things the natural obstacles to the Gospel, presented by the human heart, and all in connection with the multiplied labors and cares incident to a new settlement,* and we are astonished at the decisive energy and the exalted faith that bore down all opposition—triumphed in all their trials, and enabled them to leave behind their bright example. Long may that example be imitated in this Church, and may happiness and prosperity mark all its future history.†

This house in which we are now assembled, has been built fifty-one years, and is the *third* house of worship erected by this congregation. At the building of this, an old house was taken down which had stood *one hundred and nineteen years*. At the time when that was erected, viz., in 1671, it must have taken the place of a still older house: for it is found by vote of the town, under the above date, that the "*ould meeting house shall be carefully taken down forthwith.*" This "*ould meeting house,*" was doubtless the first built in Stamford. It appears to have been constructed of coarse materials, and had probably stood about thirty years. It stood on what was then a knoll, a little west of the present Town House. How large it was we have neither record nor traditionary evidence.

ART. 2. "The bounds upon the Main to begin upon the west side of Greenwich Bay, being about four miles from Stamford, and so to run a westerly line twenty miles into the country;" &c. Greenwich, however, was afterwards given up to Connecticut, and came under the jurisdiction of the Charter of 1662, but not until some time after the two colonies of Connecticut and New Haven had united.—This unsettled state of things in this region laid the town of Stamford open to peculiar and constant exposure. It was looked upon as the prey of the jealous Dutchman, as well as of the rapacious Indian.

* Many of the cattle of the first settlers died during the severe winters, for want of proper shelters and suitable food, and consequently they had but few oxen to plough their lands. Dr. Trumbull states that about the time when Stamford was settled, there were not ten ploughs, and perhaps not five in the whole State of Connecticut. The culture of the earth was almost entirely performed with their hoes. Scarce and valuable as money was, then a pair of oxen could not be bought for less than forty pounds sterling, nor a cow under thirty pounds, and a horse at the same price. Corn was five shillings sterling a bushel, and other articles and labor bore a proportionable price.

† There appears, also, to have been examples worthy of imitation among the female portion of the Church, although fewer instances of their virtue and piety have found their way into history. Mrs. Davenport's memory is perpetuated on the records of the town in the following language: "That eminently pious, and very virtuous, grave and worthily much lamented matron, Mrs. Martha Davenport, late wife of the Rev. John Davenport, pastor of the Church of Christ in Stamford, laid down or exchanged her mortal or temporal life to put on immortality, and doubtless, was crowned with immortal glory, on the first day of December, 1712."

The *second* meeting-house was built upon the ground occupied by this present one, and can be remembered by many of our aged people. It was "30 and 8 feet square, with a funnel on the top," i. e., from the top of the exterior walls, which were about twenty feet high, the roof rose by two contracted, or diminishing stories, and was crowned by a kind of cupola. Its entire shape was, therefore, pyramidal. The whole upper part of the house rested on heavy timbers, and was open inside quite up to the cupola. As there was some difference of opinion about the shape of this singularly constructed house, and to show how our fathers decided in difficult matters, we will read a copy of the town vote found on the ancient records :

"April 4, 1671.—At a town meeting orderly warned, per vote, it was agreed that the final decision and difference respecting the form and figure of the new meeting-house, is to be done by a solemn ordinance of God, by casting of lots, and the reason of this way is, because the town cannot possibly decide it for want of a casting vote."

It appears from another entry in the Town Records, that "the solemn ordinance being as above ordered, the *lott* carried it for a square meeting-house." It afterwards had galleries put up in it, and was seated by a vote which required that they were to "have respect to the charge of building and fitting up," and also, that they "have regard in respect to the age and *dignity of persons*." In the time of the early wars this house was strongly fortified, and was, in fact, the stronghold of the place. From the top of it the drum was beat, not only in case of alarm, but to summon the people to town meeting, and to their Sabbath worship, which, in times of danger, they were obliged to attend armed with their muskets. In 1735, this house was thoroughly repaired, and then, or soon after, it was furnished with a bell. In 1690 it was taken down, and the erection of the present house commenced.*

* Many aged people remember well the time of taking down that building. It was a work of danger as well as of much labor. The timbers were heavy and it was ascertained that they had become rotten. Notwithstanding, by the united force of all the men and teams in the town, under the superintendence of Capt. George Mills, it was safely taken to the ground and removed entirely from the foundation in a single day.

The present house by the liberality of friends, and especially of the ladies of the Congregation, has been recently repaired: (its internal structure so altered as to give increased convenience and comfort,) and furnished with a commendable taste. For these objects near one thousand dollars have been expended.

There are *sixteen* houses of Public Worship at the present time, within the ancient limits of the 1st Congregational Society, viz:—*five* Congregational, two in this town, one in Stanwich, one in Old Greenwich, and one in Darien; *four* Methodists, all in Stamford; *two* Baptists, both in Stamford; *two* Union Chapels, one in Stamford and one in Darien; *one* Episcopal in Stamford; *one* Universalist, at Long Ridge, in Stamford; and *one* Quaker, in Darien.

The original parish of Stamford has frequently been divided, by the organization of other Societies. Here, as elsewhere in our country, "the vine" has filled the land, and we will refer briefly to the "scions" which have been transplanted, and also to the other religious denominations which, as the place has increased, have grown up among us.

In 1731, a portion of the town and seventeen members of this Society were set off as a part of the parish of New Canaan.

In 1735, the town voted to the people of "Five Mile River," (afterwards Middlesex, and now Darien,) their proportion of minister's rates, for four months, "provided they have a minister." This appears to have been the commencement of a separate congregation at Darien. That Church was organized June 5th, 1744, with twenty-one members, all of whom were males. Their first meeting-house, as appeared by a date on the vane, was built in 1740. Four years since, that house was taken down, when their present neat and commodious brick church was erected. The Rev. E. D. Kinney is now their pastor. Darien was incorporated as a town, in 1820, until which time it constituted a part of Stamford.

In 1736, a vote regarding "minister's rates," similar to the above, was passed in favor of the "People at Woodpecker Ridge," now the parish of North Stamford, and the Rev. Charles Weed, as appears from the Town Records, was their first minister. In 1743, by a vote of the Society, Mr. Wright, of this place, was permitted to preach there "one Sabbath in each month." This arrangement was what was then called "winter privileges," that is, preaching on the "out-farms" when the travelling was so bad that the people could not easily get into town. Their present minister is the Rev. Henry Fuller.

In Stanwich Society, one half of which was taken from this town, their early records were destroyed by the fire which consumed the house of the Rev. Mr. Buffet, about twenty years ago. We are therefore, unable to trace the origin of that Church and Society. The Rev. Mr. Butts is their present pastor.

Besides the above parts of Stamford which have been separated from the parent Society, a small portion of Greenwich, lying near the shore west of us, has also been relinquished. These, so far as we know, are the only divisions of the original parish of Stamford, which are geographical.

The Episcopal parish in this village was organized about the year 1742. In that year the town voted to the "Episcopalians living at the east end of the town" liberty to build a house of worship on the ground where their Church now stands, and a stone in the foundation of that building bears date "1743." DR. EBENEZER DIBBLE was their first settled clergyman. He arrived in this place as a Missionary of "the Society in England for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts," in 1748, and continued his ministrations

here, during the very long period of *fifty-one years*. Dr. Dibble was a native of this state, graduated at Yale College in 1734, and went to England to receive clerical orders, before taking charge of the parish. He died in May, 1799, with a cancer in his lip at the advanced age of *eighty-four years*. He was a most excellent man—pious, amiable, talented, and in every sense an accomplished clergyman. I am permitted to make this statement on the authority of my venerable and much esteemed friend, Rev. Daniel Smith, who, in the early part of his life, was intimate with Dr. Dibble, and who, when he gave these facts to me, remarked that he “loved him as a father.” Since Dr. Dibble’s death, that Church has been supplied by the Rev. Calvin White, Dr. Child, Ammi Rogers, Salmon Wheaton, J. H. Reynolds, Jonathan Judd, Mr. Glover, and the Rev. Ambrose S. Todd, its present pastor, who was settled in the spring of 1823. The Rev. Mr. Judd and Mr. Todd are the only clergymen who have been instituted rectors of the parish since Dr. Dibble’s death. It appears that the Rev. Ammi Rogers, by some evil and most unhappy influence, produced a schism in the Church, which, although it was very much lessened during the rectorship of Mr. Judd, was not entirely healed until the arrival of the present pastor.*

In 1773, the Baptist Church in this place was constituted. The members, *twenty-one* in number, were dismissed from the First, then the only Baptist Church in the city of New York. Their first pastor was the Rev. Elkanah Holmes. He entered upon his ministry

* Mr. Rogers was degraded from the Ministry by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Jarvis, of the Diocese of Connecticut, about the year 1804, after which he continued to preach at a private house in this village, and organized a Church from the body of the schismatics, who were led to believe Mr. Rogers to be a persecuted man. This however did not continue long, as his want of moral character became every day more and more apparent, and in the course of a year he was obliged to abandon his Independent Church, for want of support. The Church in this place, which he came so near destroying, is now in a flourishing and healthy state.

The corner stone for a new house of worship was laid by the Rt. Rev. Thomas C. Brownell, D. D. L. L. D., on the 13th of May, A. D. 1842. A highly interesting and appropriate sermon, was delivered by the Rev. Wm. C. Mead, D. D. of Norwalk. After the benediction a procession was formed and proceeded to the foundation of the new building, and the corner stone thereof was laid with appropriate religious services by the Bishop of the Diocese. The address at the laying of the stone was pronounced by the Rector of the Parish. Within the stone was deposited the Holy Bible, the Book of Common Prayer—a Journal of the General Convention of 1841, together with the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States—a Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Connecticut for 1841, together with the Constitution and Canons of said Diocese—a charge to the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Connecticut by, the Rt. Rev. Thomas Church Brownell, D. D. L. L. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Connecticut—a copy of the Practical Christian and Church Chronicle—the Churchman’s Almanac for 1842—a Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Washington College—a copy of the

here, in October, 1783. In 1784, the Rev. Ebenezer Ferris became their pastor. He continued his ministrations until June, 1816, when Rev. Greenleaf S. Webb was chosen colleague with Mr. Ferris. Mr. Webb was succeeded by the Rev. John Ellis. After Mr. Ellis came the Rev. Wm. Biddle, and he was succeeded by Rev. James M. Stickney, the present pastor, May 1, 1839.* Their house of worship was erected in 1790.

In 1778, the Methodist Society in this village was organized, and the "Stamford Circuit" was the first Circuit formed in Connecticut, and probably the first in New England. Rev. Peter Moriarty was their first preacher—a laborious and successful minister. He was followed by the Rev. Jesse Lee, and subsequently, (among others who have been devoted laborers in the Gospel,) by Revs. Oliver V. Ammerman, Daniel Deviney, Benjamin Griffin, Samuel Luckey, Mr. Seaman, Mr. Matthias, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Hebbard, Mr. Oldren, and Mr. Tackerberry. Arrangements had been entered into by the Conference to secure the permanent ministerial services of Mr. Tackerberry in this society, but ill health has compelled him to relinquish the trust, and although the society has been temporarily deprived of their appointed preacher, Rev. Mr. Van Dousen, it is still in a prosperous condition.†

Since the establishment of the first Methodist Society in this village, its members and those who attend upon its preaching, have greatly increased, and at the present time there are three other Methodist Societies in this town, each having respectable chapels. The Methodist house in this village was erected in 1812, and dedicated in 1813. The other Churches have been erected within a few years, but the precise dates cannot now be given.

The civil history of Stamford, which we will now briefly notice, is identical for the last one hundred and twenty years with the history of this Congregational Society. The Society and Town Records were kept on one and the same book until the year 1760, although the business of each was generally transacted at separate meetings. The last entry of a Society Meeting on these Re-

doings of the members of St. John's Church in relation to the building of a new Church, together with a notice of the Statistics of St. John's Parish.

On the 29th of June last, the frame was erected without the least accident, under the direction of Mr. Thomas P. Dixon, builder and contractor. This, when completed, will be a splendid edifice, finished in Gothic style, and covering an area of about *four thousand feet*.

* Since the delivery of this Discourse, the Rev. James M. Stickney has resigned his charge, and the Rev. Addison Parker has accepted a call and become the pastor of that Church.

† In May last the annual Conference assigned the Rev. George Brown to the pastoral charge of the Stamford Station, who is now engaged in his ministerial labors with this people.

cords, is Dec. 24, 1759, when Col. Jonathan Hoyt, Mr. Abraham Davenport, and Capt. David Waterbury, were appointed Society's Committee; and the last mention made of the Society in the town books, is the following receipt appended to the doings of the last named meeting:

"Stamford, January, 1760, received from Mr. Stephen Bishop, the sum of 69 and 9 pence one farthing lawful money, in full of my salary the year past.
"NOAH WELLES."

After that time the town and society were managed as distinct organizations, and their records were kept separately. Mr. Bishop was continued as clerk of the Society, and Mr. Samuel Jarvis was appointed the town clerk.

The first civil authority of the town consisted of those who originated the settlement and founded the Congregational Church. Their names I need not repeat. They had come to these parts to enjoy the liberty of the Gospel, and they considered it to be their bounden duty to enter into a civil confederation. By a provision in the purchase contract with New Haven, they were to join with that plantation in their form of government. The records of that colony, with its associate towns, show it to have been, in the highest sense, a Religious Republic. Their peculiar system of jurisprudence, however, was relinquished on uniting with Connecticut colony in 1668, under the charter of Charles II.*

* One of the peculiarities in the construction of the New Haven Colony, and which has often been made the subject of animadversion, was, that "all government," civil as well as ecclesiastical, "should be in the Church." In the Connecticut Colony, however, "all orderly persons possessing a freehold estate to a certain amount might be made freemen." Without being called upon to decide which of these colonies pursued the most enlightened policy, it is proper for us to say, that this feature, as well as others in the New Haven jurisdiction, was, in 1665, entirely abandoned. In the advertisement of the Statutes of Connecticut, (edition of 1808) edited by Hon. John Treadwell, Enoch Perkins, and Thomas Day, Esqs., we find the following statement. "Though two Colonies are united in this state, we are indebted to but one government for our laws." New Haven at the union brought a rich portion into the political family, but with her name she relinquished her system of jurisprudence. So entire was the relinquishment that *not a single statute provision* was retained. To this conclusion we were led in the first instance, partly by some examination of the New Haven records, and partly by our success in tracing the several acts, which were afterwards in force, to a different origin. We have since been informed by the venerable historian of Connecticut (Dr. Trumbull) "that such also was the result of his researches.

We find also that Stamford never cordially adopted the New Haven views in regard to the institution of a religious test in civil government. They had come from the Connecticut colony where that principle was unpopular. Mr. Denton, and a portion of those who removed with him, were very much opposed to it, and probably the consent of the majority was only obtained when they found that they could not get a title to their lands unless they would "join with the New Haven plantation in the form of government there adopted." In 1662,

All public business in the several towns was transacted in that far famed assembly, "the Town Meeting," and the Hall of Legislation was, not the market-place, as at Athens, but the Meeting-House.

A town-house, and probably the first one, was built here about the year 1743. The following vote is the record of the fact: "December 2, 1742, voted to build a new town-house, 30 feet long, 20 feet wide, with 7 1-2 feet studs, and to have a chimney on each end the width of the house."

"Voted, to set the town house on the *Knowll* where the old meeting-house stood."

The first Selectmen were Lt. Francis Bell, John Holly, and George Slason.

Stamford was the first time represented in the General Court at New Haven in 1643, and Richard Gildersleeve, and Captain John Underhill were the delegates. At this time a local court was instituted at Stamford, vested with the same powers as the New Haven Court. Thurston Raynor was appointed the Chief Magistrate, and Captain Underhill, Mr. Mitchell, and Andrew Ward were appointed assistant Judges. The Town, however, continued to be annually represented at New Haven as before.

These magistrates were the dignitaries of the town, and all, especially the youth, were taught to treat them with the utmost respect. It is also worthy of notice, what a degree of religious awe and decorum pervaded society *at that time*. All public affairs were transacted in the most solemn manner. Prayer mingled with business at the town meeting, with military musters, and all prominent elections were opened with introductory sermons.

Legal affairs wore the same serious aspect. I will quote here the devout preface of an ancient deed, which shows the feeling of those early times: "To all Christian People to whom these presents shall come: I Richard Higgenbothom of Stamford, the Colony of Connecticut, in New England, Tailor, send Greeting *in our Lord God Everlasting*, know ye, that for the consideration of," &c.

In morals, too, so far as the *spirit* of their doings is concerned, our fathers have left us a worthy example. I introduce this subject in this connection, because in morals they thought it best to act by legislation, (a thing indeed not entirely unknown at the present day,) and will give a few extracts from the town records:

"At a court holden at Stamford, 1648, John Coe complaineth against Daniel for disturbing the ordinance of God on the Sabbath

three years before the union of the two colonies, Dr. Trumbull states that "the major part of Stamford" (and other towns) tendered their persons and estates to Connecticut, and petitioned to enjoy the protection and privileges of that commonwealth, and, in 1664, Mr. Richard Law, a principal gentleman at Stamford (who had been one of the warmest friends of New Haven) also deserted them. *Vid. Trumbull*, vol. i., p. 261—283, 284.

day. Daniel is sentenced by the court to give public satisfaction for it."

"1648, John —— questioned for selling of wine without a license from the court, and is now forbidden to sell any more by *retaille*."

"May 5, 1665, Francis Holmes was questioned for his misconduct, being overtaken in drink so that he was unable to give a rational answer to anything propounded to him. Upon a confession of his own guilt he is fined to pay 2 shillings to the treasury of the court."

"December 28, 1665, Wm. Bishop, Obadiah Seely, and Eben Jones were questioned for their miscarriages on Monday night, by excessive drinking, and being out at unreasonable hours in the night, for which miscarriages each person is to perform and to pay 8s 4d."

"May 23, 1667, Francis Brown complained of for being drunk, proved by four persons on their oaths, for which fault he is fined two shillings."

So we find prosecutions against licentiousness, swearing, turbulent carriage, sabbath-breaking, &c., all of which show how determined our ancestors were to bring *what they thought* would be the strongest influence against all immorality.

The records of the town meetings also indicate that there was decisive action upon the subject of education among the first settlers, and that at an early period the "schoolmaster was abroad."

In 1667, a Mr. Richards, by vote, "was permitted to sojourn in town for a while to try his experience in school teaching."

In 1671, it was voted that a Mr. Rider shall "have so much of the *ould* meeting-house as will build him up a school-house of about 10 or 12 feet square."

Other resolutions show that the town was bent on giving universal instruction to the rising generation. True, the method of their proceeding to us appears antiquated, and we do not need to perpetuate their customs. The progress of time has made them obsolete. Neither do we ask for the *forms* of their stern morality. But its *spirit*, how much we need it! A tenth part of their reverence for God, for the decisions of the magistrates, for good order, and universal education, and our town would prosper, and if felt everywhere our country would be safe.

But it becomes our painful duty to pursue the secular and civil history of Stamford into those troublesome times which followed the settlement of this place—a chapter of trial and disaster.

The Pequod war had terminated four years before this town was located, in the great swamp fight, about two miles west of the present village of Fairfield. But it was not many years before the Indians again became hostile. The Dutch who had settled on the Sound below, and at New York, had from the first given much trouble, as the

English settlements were ever an object of their jealousy. From these causes, Stamford was exposed to constant annoyance. At one time the Dutch threatened an invasion of all the English settlements, and there was much alarm. At another time they quarrelled with the Indians, who, fleeing before them into this town, drew upon this place the hostility of their enemies, and the people were at great expense in fortifying and guarding themselves. In the summer and fall of 1643, the Indians fell upon the Dutch, killed fifteen of their number, and drove in all the inhabitants of the English and Dutch settlements west of Stamford. At this critical moment, the Dutch Governor at New York engaged Captain Underhill of Stamford to assist him in the war. He did so, and it was bloody and destructive. This excited the Stamford Indians, who had before been peaceable, and they became so tumultuous and hostile, that an order was taken "that every family in which there was a man capable of bearing arms should send one completely armed, every Lord's Day, to defend the people during Divine worship. At this period the Stamford people were in great fear lest they should share the fate of the settlements to the west of them, and wrote to the General Court at New Haven for assistance. About this time the Indians murdered a man belonging to Massachusetts, near this place, and when the General Court made an effort to apprehend the murderer, the Indians rose in great numbers and exceedingly alarmed the people, both here and at Fairfield. The court drafted a body of men who were ordered to march to Stamford on the shortest notice. Soon after this, an Indian went boldly into the house of Mr. Phelps, which stood east of the north commons, and made a murderous assault on Mrs. Phelps. The Indian finding no man at home, took up a lathing-hammer and approached her as though he would put it into her hands, but as she stooped down to take her child from the cradle, he struck her upon the head, which instantly felled her to the floor. He then struck her twice with the sharp part of the hammer which penetrated her skull. Supposing her dead, he plundered the house and made his escape. The wounds of this woman, which at first appeared to be mortal, were finally healed, but her brain was so affected that she lost her reason. This Indian was afterwards delivered up and executed at New Haven. The story of his execution shows the savage firmness of the Indian character. The executioner cut off his head with a falchion, but it was cruelly done. He gave him eight blows before he effected the execution, and *the Indian sat erect and motionless until his head was severed from his body.*—See Trumbull.

At this period the Indians were so troublesome that the settlement of the town for some time made but little progress. But in 1646, a great battle was fought between the Indians and Dutch, in that part of Greenwich called Strickland's Plain, about three and a half miles from this village, where great numbers were slain on both sides. Captain Underhill, of this place, then in the employment of the

Dutch, commanded in this engagement. He with great difficulty kept the field, and the Indians withdrew. This victory, although it greatly crippled the power of the Indians, did not make them peaceable.

In October, 1748, John Whitmore, one of the most respectable men in Stamford, and who had represented the town at the New Haven Court, was killed by the Indians while he was looking for his cattle in the woods, at the Sequest, about a mile from the village. Great excitement was produced by this murder throughout the whole country. The people of Hartford and New Haven, united with the people of Stamford, and fifty men were drafted, armed, and victualled for the purpose of searching out and bringing the savage murderer to justice. It does not appear, however, that this was ever done, but such decisive steps were taken that the Indians afterwards were more peaceable.*

* It is probable that the young chief, Taphanse, son of Sagamore Ponus, was the murderer of Mr. Whitmore. He was suspected at the time and accused of it, but, with great coolness, he denied the accusation, and charged the murder upon an Indian known by the name of Toquattoes. But suspicion never rested, and in 1662, fourteen years after, as is found by the New Haven records, Taphanse was arrested and brought to trial. Although full proof of his guilt could not be found, the circumstantial evidence was as follows:

1st. It was proved that on the day when the murder was committed, Taphanse, with some other Indians, came to the house of Goodman Whitmore, and shook Goodwife Whitmore by the hand, and asked her "where her *netop* (friend or husband) was, for he so big loved her netop," and that this fawning of his was such, as awakened instantly the woman's suspicion, and filled her with apprehension that some evil had befallen her husband.

2d. It was proved that he came to Mr. Law's about sunrise on the second morning after Goodman Whitmore left home, and said that "an Englishman had been killed." This was the first that any one knew of it. On being asked when, he answered, that "he knew not whether ten miles off or twenty," but pointed up riverward, intimating that it was in that direction. It also appeared that Mr. Law, and some others, went with Taphanse to the wigwams, and on the way he so trembled and shook that several of them took notice of it as a sign of guilt, and that, although, he had promised to return with them and assist in taking the dead body, he gave them the slip and made his escape.

3d. It was proved that when Uncas and his Indians, who had been sent to assist in finding the murderer, went with several of the Stamford Indians, to seek the dead body, Taphanse not only conducted them directly to the spot, although he had before denied that he knew where it was, but afterwards as they were roasting venison, he slipped out of sight and away, so that Uncas brought word that Taphanse was *matchit* (naught, or evil).

4th. There appeared to be no little correspondence and mutual understanding between Taphanse and the murderer. It was a suspicious circumstance, that he knew so perfectly that Toquattoes did the murder—did he *see* him do it? and it appeared that though Toquattoes had been in Stamford the winter before the trial, and though Taphanse knew himself to be suspected, he took no pains to clear himself by exposing the guilty person.

The answers which Taphanse gave to all this testimony were exceedingly ingenious and, taken in connection with the whole conduct of the young Chief

In 1665, some restless spirits made an attempt to induce the people of Stamford to revolt to the Dutch of New York. They insisted that the government of the Connecticut Colony was lax, and did not aid in prosecuting the war as they ought. This attempt at insurrection, however, was soon quieted—all engaged in it were punished, and to remove cause of complaint, a guard of men during the winter was sent to Stamford for its defence, and as the inhabitants had been at great expense, not only in watching and guarding the town, but in erecting fortifications around the meeting-house, the public taxes for the current year were abated by the general court. This was a year of uncommon expense, alarm, and distress. Captain Underhill* sent to his friends in Rhode Island for assistance, and

in this affair, show how native talent and consummate shrewdness, were united in the cunning savage.

The sentence of the court pronounced by Governor Leet, was that Taphanse is guilty of suspicion, that he pay the charges of the court and remain in du-rance until the next session. But upon his begging to have his chain taken off, and solemnly promising to be present when the court should again sit, he was released. Nothing appears to have been done at the next court, and he probably escaped unpunished.—*Vid. Rec. New Haven and Bacon's Hist. Dis.*

* This singular man who figured so conspicuously in the early history of Stamford, was a soldier of fortune. He was sent with the forces of James I. to aid the Dutch in the Low Countries, in casting off the yoke of a master, and returned to England with the title of Captain, and with a Dutch wife and a Dutch language. Soon after he emigrated to Boston, and was well received among the valiant and pious. He then came to Stamford, and, being of a warlike turn, became a most notorious Indian fighter. He was not only in the battle of Strickland's Plain; but for a number of years was almost continually engaged in war, either on behalf of the Dutch or English, and was often in great peril. At one time he says "Myself received a *shotte* in the left *hippe* thro' a sufficient buffe (or leathern) coat, and if I had not been supplied with such a garment, the arrow would have pierced through me." He received another between the neck and shoulder, "hanging in the linen of his head-piece." It seems that he and his soldiers, fought the Indians, armed with swords and muskets, and clad in "Corseletts, Helmets, and Bandoliers." Capt. Underhill was an author as well as a soldier, and there exists in the Massachusetts' Historical Collections a reprint of a work entitled—"News from America, or a New and Experimental Discovery of New England, containing a true relation of the warlike proceedings these two years past, with a view of the Indian Fort or Palisado. By Captain John Underhill, Commander in the Wars there, London, Printed for Peter Cole, 1668." As a specimen of his spirit and style of writing, take the following: In describing his approach to the shore of Block Island, with his shallop and twelve men, he says, "Up rose from behind a barricado fifty or sixty able fighting men, as *strait* as arrows, very tall and of active *bodies*, having their arrows notched, and drew near to the water side, and let fly at the soldiers as though they had meant to have made an end of us all in a moment." The Captain, among others that were wounded, was "pierced through his clothes," and also "struck in the forehead by an arrow, and would inevitably have been slain had not" as he says, "God in his Providence moved the heart of his wife to persuade him to go armed that day with his helmet, on which the arrow struck and fell blunted at his feet." From this Captain John very seriously argues two things: 1st. "that God in this influencing of the woman

with such of the inhabitants as he could obtain for soldiers, made the best defence in his power. A great proportion of the time was employed by the magistrates in raising men and making preparation for war. The common people were, at the same time, called off from their labors and worn down with watching by night and by day.

Dr. Trumbull says, that at this time, the Dutch at New York only waited for a reinforcement from Holland to attack and reduce all the English Colonies. Of this both they and the colonists were in constant expectation. It was reported and feared that when the signal should be given from the Dutch ships, the Indians would rise, *fire the settlements*, and thus begin the work of destruction.* Such were the early

maketh use of weak means to keep his purpose unviolated;" and 2d. "that no man should despise the counsel of his wife, *though she be a woman*." Captain Underhill was in the Pequod war a coadjutor of Captain John Mason, and was at the taking of the Indian Fort near the river Mystic. He was to force the southern entrance and Mason the western. In describing this bloody fight in which women and children perished in one indiscriminate slaughter, he says, "Great and doleful was the sight to the view of the young soldiers, who had never been in the *warre*." But the Captain had been accustomed to such slaughter, and, although evidently conscience troubled at the remembrance of it, he attempts to quiet himself by saying, "the Scripture declareth, that women and children must perish with their parents," and he adds, "we had sufficient light from the Word of God for our proceedings *we must contend earnestly for the truth*." The perverted use of these quotations remind us of a method of Scripture interpretation, less ancient than the days of Captain John Underhill.— Few individuals, however, rendered more important services to the Colonies than he. A man of untiring energy, activity and courage, and such was the rapidity of his movements, that his enemies were generally taken by surprise, and consequently defeated. He died at Oyster Bay, Long Island, in 1672.— *Dunlap's History of New York*, p. 338.— *Thompson's History of Long Island*, Vol. i. p. 82.

* Dr. Trumbull says, "a horrid and execrable plot was at this time discovered, which had been concerted by the Dutch Governor and the Indians for the destruction of the English Colonies."

The Indian Chief Ninigrate had spent the winter at Manhattan with Stuyvesant on the business. He had been over Hudson's River among the western Indians; procured a uniting of the Sachems; made ample declarations against the English, and solicited their aid against the Colonies. He was brought back in the Spring in a Dutch sloop, with arms and ammunition from the Dutch Governor. The Indians for some hundreds of miles appeared disaffected, and hostile tribes which before had been always friendly to the English became inimical and the Indians boasted that they were to have goods from the Dutch at "half the price" for which the English sold them, and "powder as plenty as sand." The Long Island Indians testified to the plot. Nine Sachems who lived in the vicinity of the Dutch, sent their united testimony to Stamford, "that the Dutch Governor had solicited them by promising them guns, powder, swords, wampum, coats and waistcoats, to cut off the English." The messengers who were sent, declared "they were as the mouth of the nine Sagamores who all spake!" They would not lie. One of the nine Sachems afterwards came to Stamford with other Indians and testified the same. The plot was confirmed by Indian testimonies from all quarters. It was expected that a Dutch fleet would arrive, and that the Dutch and Indians would unite in the destruction of the Eng-

troubles of the brave and venerated fathers of this people. From the vicinity of the place to navigable waters, Stamford has been much exposed, not only in the Dutch and Indian wars, but also in the French, Revolutionary, and last wars. Especially in the Revolutionary war, the inhabitants were in a state of continual alarm. Although the British did not often come within the town in much force, yet the place was almost entirely surrounded by the desolations of the enemy, and the noise of battle. General Putnam's head quarters, with two brigades of infantry and cavalry were at Redding, and such havoc was made by the enemy, among the towns in this region, that a brigade was sent from West Point for their protection as far as New Canaan. Bedford, Danbury, Fairfield, and Norwalk were burned.* At Ridgefield, an engagement took place, in which Colonel Gould was killed, and Gen. Wooster received a mortal wound. The battle of White Plains was only about fourteen miles distant. At Darien, then a part of Stamford, a whole congregation was attacked while at their worship on the Sabbath, and the male portion, together with their venerable minister, Dr. Moses Mather, who was in the desk at the time, and about forty horses, were carried off to Long Island.

At Horseneck the enemy appeared in force, and attacked a small body of troops stationed at that place. General Putnam, who happened to be there at the time, in his official returns of March 2, 1779, says, "I therefore directed the troops to retire and form on a little hill a short distance from Horseneck, while I proceeded to Stamford, [he rode down the stone steps as he started] and collected the militia, and a few continental troops which were there, with which I returned immediately, and found that the enemy, after plundering the inhabitants of a principal part of their effects, and destroying a few salt works, and a small sloop and store, were on their return again." The enemy's force were about fifteen hundred, and some accounts say they came within four miles of Stamford. Another small party came some distance past the place now occupied by Dr. Samuel Lockwood, and Mr. Joseph Selleck, who is still living, narrowly escaped them with his life. Mr. S. says he fled on horseback with his brother, the British

lish plantations. It was rumored that the time for the massacre, was fixed upon the day of the public election when the freemen would be generally from home. The whole country was exceedingly alarmed, and as Stamford was a frontier town, a body of men was despatched for its defence. The plantations, especially those near the enemy, "were greatly hindered in their ploughing, sowing, planting, and in all their affairs; and the people were worn down with constant watching, and guarding, and put to great expense for the common safety."

* Norwalk and Bedford were both burned on the same day, (July 11, 1799) but by different parties of the enemy; and a number of aged people are now living with us, who saw the smoke rising from both places. It was on the Sabbath—"Oh what a Sabbath that was," said an aged lady to us, "we carried all our furniture out of the house and hid it in the woods, for we expected that we should be burned next."

horsemen hotly pursuing, and firing at him until they were met by the Stamford militia, when they suddenly retreated. But the principal annoyance during this war was found in those pestiferous pillagers called "*cow boys*." Cattle, horses, and whatever else came in their way were plundered and carried off to the enemy.* Although not many

* The party who pursued Mr. Selleck, drove off forty head of cattle belonging to Captain Isaac Lockwood. They entered his house, broke furniture, emptied feather beds, and thus wantonly destroyed what they could not carry away. A number of families in that street were treated in a similar manner. Their work of destruction, however, was short—for they were obliged to push away before the approaching forces of the town. Before they reached the enemies' lines they were overtaken, and a considerable part of the plunder recovered—but the cattle were so barbarously hacked, by the cutlasses of the enemy, that many of them afterwards died. Many other instances of similar outrage could be given—but the enemy were not left without a sort of annoyance by which payment was sometimes obtained with interest. The following is an instance, and exhibits a cool intrepidity to which it would be difficult to find a parallel. A Frigate and Sloop of War, belonging to the enemy, were lying in Oyster Bay, opposite this village, and the whaleboats from this place, commanded by Captain Jones, determined on taking the sloop. On a foggy morning they rowed silently around her, and coming nearer and nearer, they were at length discovered, and instantly hailed—"Who's there?" "A friend." "A friend to whom?" "I'll let you know," said Jones, "the Rebels have been rowing round the Bay all night and you've known nothing about it. I'll report you to the Admiral for neglecting your watch." By this time the men in the boats were climbing up the sides of the British vessel, while Jones, who was as rough as the ocean on which he had been brought up, kept storming away at the Captain for his negligence. The British officer trembled from head to foot, thinking that he had run foul of some violent old tory, who would certainly report him to his commander. He assured Jones that he had kept the strictest watch—begged him to look at the order of his vessel—the training of his guns, and the priming of his muskets. A number of these muskets were by this time in the hands of the assailing party, when instantly Jones's foot stamped heavily upon the deck, and in the next moment the Sloop was theirs! She carried fifteen or twenty guns, and was fully equipped for service. Another vessel was about this time captured by these whaleboats as she lay in the narrows below. They attacked her in open day—one, as they approached, had its rudder carried away by a cannon shot, and swinging under the stern of the English vessel, the men entered her cabin windows, just as the crew were driven below, by the men in the other boats, who had obtained possession of her deck. After a short and desperate fight with broadswords and bayonets, in the cabin, the crew surrendered, and the vessel was brought to Stamford.

On land there were also repeated instances of soldierrick bravery. A skirmish took place a little beyond Noroton River, (near the spot now occupied by the house of Captain Isaac Weed) between the Militia and a Company of fifty or sixty of the British, under Colonel Upham, when three young men of this place fell, mortally wounded, under the fire of the enemy. But they were soon obliged to retire before the rallying force of the town. At another time, a party who had come over from Lloyds Neck, were repulsed and driven back with such spirit, that Deacon Benjamin Weed, (who is still living among us) says that he himself "got seventeen shots at them before they reached their boats." He pressed on alone, keeping about forty rods in advance of the company to which he belonged, and without any hat, and blackened with smoke, poured

lives were lost from this place, during the war for Independence, yet the people exhibited a most determined and patriotic spirit, as may be seen by reference to the resolutions in their town meetings.*

in his incessant fire upon the enemy.—“When we were near the water,” says Mr. Weed, “a musket shot struck a young man near me and he fell instantly, for the ball had cut the main artery of his neck. I ran to him, raised him upon my knee, and saw that the blood was pouring in a torrent from the wound. He expressed a strong desire to see his friends before he died, but I told him that he would never see them again in this world, and in a few minutes he expired.” Strongly as the above incidents illustrate the valor of our ancestors, we trust that the future history of our country will never demand their repetition.

* “At a special Town Meeting, Oct. 7, 1774: Col. Davenport, Moderator.—Samuel Jarvis, Clerk:

“Voted—The inhabitants of the Town sensibly affected with the distress to which the Town of Boston and Province of Massachusetts Bay, are subjected by several unconstitutional acts of the British Parliament, and also viewing the Quebec bill, whereby the Roman Catholic religion is established over a great part of his Majesty’s extensive continent of America, as an attempt, not barely to destroy our civil liberties, but as an open declaration that our religious privileges, which our forefathers fled their native country to enjoy, are very soon to be abolished; hoping to convince the people of this extreme continent, that, notwithstanding our long silence, we are by no means unwilling to join with our sister towns to assert our just rights, and oppose every design of a corrupt ministry to enslave America, do declare that we acknowledge our subjection to the Crown of Great Britain and all the constituted powers thereto belonging, as established in the Illustrious House of Hanover; and that it is our earnest desire that the same peaceable connexion should subsist between us and the mother country as has subsisted for a long time before the late unconstitutional measures, adopted by the Parliament of Great Britain, and we hope that some plan will be found out by the General Congress to effect the reconciliation we wish for: yet we are determined, in every lawful way, to join with our sister Colonies resolutely to defend our just rights and oppose all illegal and unconstitutional acts of the British Parliament that respects America; that we are pleased that a Congress of Deputies from the Colonies is now met at Philadelphia, and relying upon the wisdom of that body, we declare that we are ready to adopt such reasonable measures as shall, by them, be judged for the general good of the inhabitants of America.

“2d. That Messrs. John Lloyd, Samuel Hutton, Captain Samuel Young, Captain David Hait, and Charles Weed be a Committee to receive subscriptions for the supply of the poor in the Town of Boston, who suffer in consequence of an act of Parliament, called the Port Act; and that the said Committee cause anything that shall be collected to be transmitted to the care of the Committee of Ways and Means in the town of Boston, to be employed by them as they shall think fit.”

We have been able to gather only the following brief sketch of the men of this place who acted prominently during our revolutionary struggle:

Brigadier General DAVID WATERBURY, commanded all the Connecticut forces stationed along the shore, from Byram Bridge to Rhode Island. He was a distinguished officer, and had held the rank of Colonel in the French war. He was taken prisoner and carried to England with General Ethan Allen, but was afterwards exchanged and served his country faithfully until the peace of 1783.

Few of the present population can be sensible of the vexations, losses, and distress of such a border warfare as during the revolutionary struggle this region was annoyed with, only as they hear these

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Hoyt, was of the 8th Connecticut Regiment in the United States army, and was a brave man and a good officer.

Colonel Abraham Davenport was for a long time one of the Counsellors of the Colony, and afterwards for the State. He was also a Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He had a vigorous understanding; and was distinguished for uncommon fineness of mind and Christian integrity. Dr. Dwight relates of him, the following characteristic anecdote:

"The 19th of May, 1780, was a remarkably dark day, candles were lighted, the birds were silent, and fowls retired to roost. A very general opinion prevailed that the Day of Judgment was at hand. The House of Representatives being unable to transact business adjourned. A proposal to adjourn the Senate was under consideration, when the opinion of Colonel Davenport was asked. He answered, I am against the adjournment—the Day of Judgment is either approaching, or it is not—*If it is not*, there is no cause for an adjournment: *If it is*, I choose to be found doing my duty—I wish therefore that candles may be brought." He died suddenly at Danbury while presiding in the County Court. After he was struck with death, he heard a considerable part of the trial there pending, gave the charge to the jury, and noticed an article in the testimony which had escaped the attention of the counsel on both sides. He then retired, and was soon a corpse.

Colonel Charles Webb commanded the 7th Regiment, Connecticut Militia. He was a bold and excellent officer. In the latter part of December, 1777, at White Marsh six miles from Philadelphia, he was attacked by a party of Hessians in ambush, and so desperate was the engagement that eighty-four of his Regiment were killed on the spot, besides a great number wounded.

Major John Davenport, was a worthy officer in the Militia in this section of the State.

Captain Ebenezer Jones, who commanded the whaleboats, was noted for his desperate courage and constant annoyance of the English shipping in the Sound.

Captain Reuben Scofield of the Town Guards, was a magistrate, and an active man during the whole war.

Captain Amos Smith was nearly the whole of the war out either with the State Troops or Militia, and was one of the most brave and daring soldiers of the Revolution.

Captain Samuel Hoyt, of the 5th Regiment, Connecticut Militia, was in the service during the whole war.

Captain Isaac Bell, was a Captain in the Regiment raised in Connecticut for the defence of Horseneck.

Captain Sylvanus Brown, was of the 2d Company, 8th Regiment of the line.

Captain Charles Smith, commanded in the State Troops, who were stationed between the lines.

Captain Isaac Lockwood, was in command of the Town Guards, and was frequently out in scouting parties.

Captain Sylvanus Knapp was in the same service.

Lieutenant Seth Weed, Ensign Joseph Smith, Captain George Mills, and Mr. John Hoyt, (town clerk) were known as active and leading men.

Others, whose names, on account of our limited means of information at this late period are omitted, were doubtless equally brave and patriotic, and equally deserving of a grateful remembrance and an honorable service.

“tales of the war” from the lips of here and there a veteran patriot who still lingers among us—a few more years and their lips too, now palsying with age, will be silent, and the page of history alone will tell the story of the revolution. Venerable men! we will watch over their age, even as they bled over our infancy. *We can not but revere such men.* Our first fathers founded this fair country—our late fathers fought for it. LIBERTY was the watchword of both, and the generous patriotism, the religion, and literature transmitted to us in the institutions they planted have made that liberty doubly valuable. Let their children, too, be patriot Christians. Let every true son and daughter of New England guard that liberty, and love that religion, and learn from the Pilgrims that the fear of God is the only sure basis of civil freedom!

This village was incorporated as a borough in 1831, and the present town now contains about four thousand inhabitants. At different periods in its latter history it has produced names not unknown in the State, and whose voices have been heard in the counsels of the nation. A few only of the descendants of the primitive settlers can be traced to the present population. The Bells, the Bishops, the Hollys, the Newmans, the Weeds, the Sellecks, and perhaps others, are names still known among us. One fact in this connection may be considered worthy of notice, Mr. Edwin S. Holly, a present selectman of this town, is a lineal descendant of John Holly, one of the first selectmen of the town *two hundred years ago.* He is of the 6th generation.*

* The records of Stamford for the first twenty-five years after its settlement are so unintelligible that it is very difficult to read any part of them. The first list of names we can find, which in all probability did not embrace but a small portion of the population, is appended to the following resolution, adopted at a Town Meeting, April 22, 1665, “all such inhabitants of Stamford that have any privilege in the horse pasture, are to give in their names for one horse, or two, and they shall fence for their names as hereunder written.” Then follow forty-nine names with one horse, and four for two horses. Of which there are four Howes, three Hollys, three Slasons, two Bates, two Finches, two Noyes, two Weeds, two Newmans, two Millers, two Dibbles, two Bells, two Sellecks, and one each Law, Seely, Gurnsey, Buxton, Thompson, Dan, Brown, Hardy, Ferris, Jagger, Simkins, Stevens, Theal, Wescott, Lockwood, Scofield, Smith, Green, Ambler, Crissy, Clason, Petit, Webb, Studwell, Hoyt, and Knapp.

In 1670, we find a list of freemen numbering one hundred and ninety-seven. September 10, 1777, the records contain a list of two hundred and sixty-seven names who subscribed to the oath of fidelity.

The Registers of Electors in this town, under the late law, made out for the election in April, 1842, contains seven hundred and ninety-three names, of which ninety-one are Scofields, forty-seven Smiths, forty-three Lockwoods, thirty-eight Weeds, thirty-five Hoyts, nineteen Junes, seventeen Knapps, sixteen Hollys, fourteen Jones, thirteen Lounsberrys, twelve Palmers, fourteen Webbs, twelve Waterburys, twelve Stevens, eleven Browns, ten Buxtons, six Adams, four Ayres, four Austins, two Andries, three Bates, nine Bells, eight Bishops, two Boutons, five Briggs, five Brushes, two Bakers, six Curtis, seven Clasons, nine

But I must close this discourse, already, perhaps, too long. I look around upon this assembly and say, this is the history of your paternal ancestry, and your origin as a civil and religious community. Surely the Lord hath brought a vine out of Egypt. It has been well planted—its roots have struck deep, and it fills the land. 'Tis well we meet this evening. The recollection of the past shall make us better. We will hallow the memory of the pilgrims—we will love these hills and valleys for they were the homestead of our fathers. This lovely village shall be made still more lovely by the exhibition of Puritan virtues. Let the very name of Puritan be revered. It is the synonyma of all that is desirable in Liberty, devoted in patriotism, and holy in religion. Let us delight to honor and vindicate its claims, and imitate those who bore it, until the world shall know its worth, and see in us a specimen of its spirit.

We ask not for their manners; “they have gone by with the age that produced them.” We ask not their *forms*, either in religion or legislation: but we do ask for their *spirit* and their *principles*. God grant that they may be ours and our country’s until time shall end.

But in closing, let me ask, where are those Fathers? Gone—! Where are those who first peopled this fair village? Long gone to dwell with the dead! “Dust mingles with dust—ashes with ashes,” but their spirits are with God. Where shall we be, when next this anniversary returns?—Gone too!—even the youngest grown aged and passed away! Long before that time, the voice of the speaker will be hushed in death, and the ear of the hearer lie dull in the dark cold grave!—But the place will teem with another population, who will receive from us, not only their existence, but those influences

Crabbs, two Caldwells, six Davenportes, eight Deans, three Dibbles, two Das-kums, eight Dans, two Dixons, six Finchs, nine Ferris, three Foxs, two Harms, eight Husteds, four Hobbys, two Hubbards, two Handfords, two Howes, two Jessups, two Jarmans, two Jonsons, two Ingersolls, two Ingrahams, nine Leeds, two Mills, three Minors, seven Millers, two Marshalls, three Meads, six Nich-ols, four Newmans, nine Provosts, three Pecks, three Potts, three Quintards, five Raymonds, eight Reynolds, three Richs, three Reeds, two Sibleys, three Seelys, five Sellecks, two Sherwoods, two Slausons, four Studwells, two St. Johns, three Tuckers, three Todds, three Thompsons, two Varnells, five War-ings, two Warrens, eight Waters, six Wilmots, three Wardwells, five Whites, two Woodmans, three Weeks, nine Youngs, and one each by the name of Alice, Bunnel, Bretet, Btuce, Barnum, Bostwick, Blanchard, Blackman, Barlow, Bal-lad, Brundage, Bullard, Chew, Clock, Capron, Coggsweil, Damon, Dayton, Doyl, Davis, Doty, Delevan, Duncan, Eells, Eddy, Finney, Fairchild, Fitch, Gowdy, Gay, Gailor, Hull, Hawley, Haight, Hendrie, Hedden, Hill, Hesley, Jarvis, Kellogg, Klopper, Keeler, Kenworthy, Kirk, Laurie, Mc Millen, Mes-nard, Mitchell, Mathews, Marvin, Merrit, Northrop, Nash, Patten, Platt, Ros-borough, Rogers, Roberts, Robinson, Rafferty, Richards, Riggs, Slater, Sincox, Sanderson, Sniffin, Sarles, Scott, Stanton, Swan. Sanford, Tobias, Trowbridge, Wood, Wessels, Walton, and Wescom.

which will mould their character. From us the future generations in Stamford are to receive their civil advantages, their literary institutions, and their religious privileges. Their intellectual and moral character, whatever it becomes, will be the living record of our worth and care, and in them we shall still live, either in infamy or honor. How important, then, that we act well our part, that posterity may bless, and Heaven reward us !

THE END.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS,
DELIVERED IN THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN
STAMFORD, Ct.
AT THE
CELEBRATION OF THE SECOND
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE TOWN.

BY REV. J. W. ALVORD,

DEC. 22d, 1841.

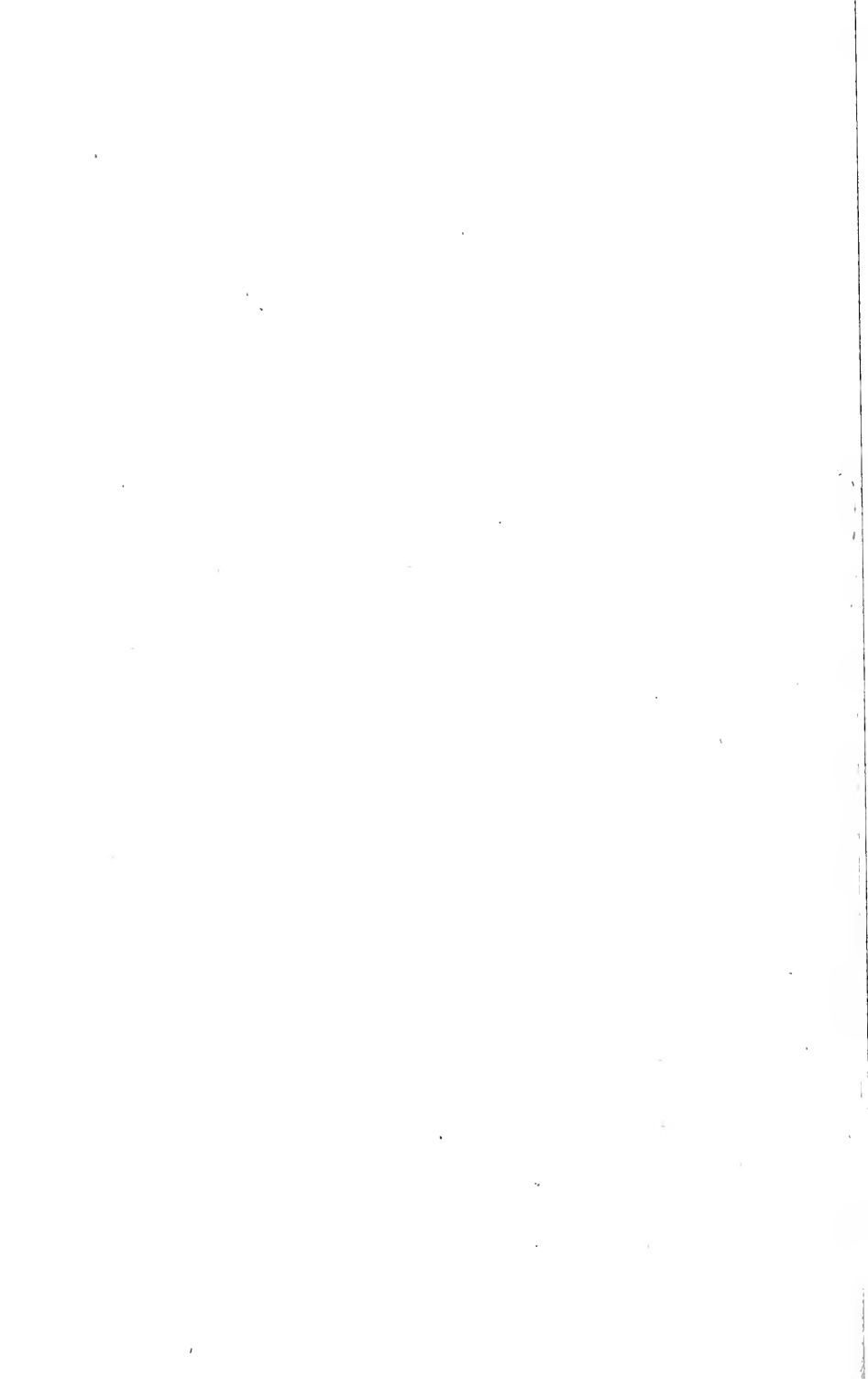
NEW YORK :

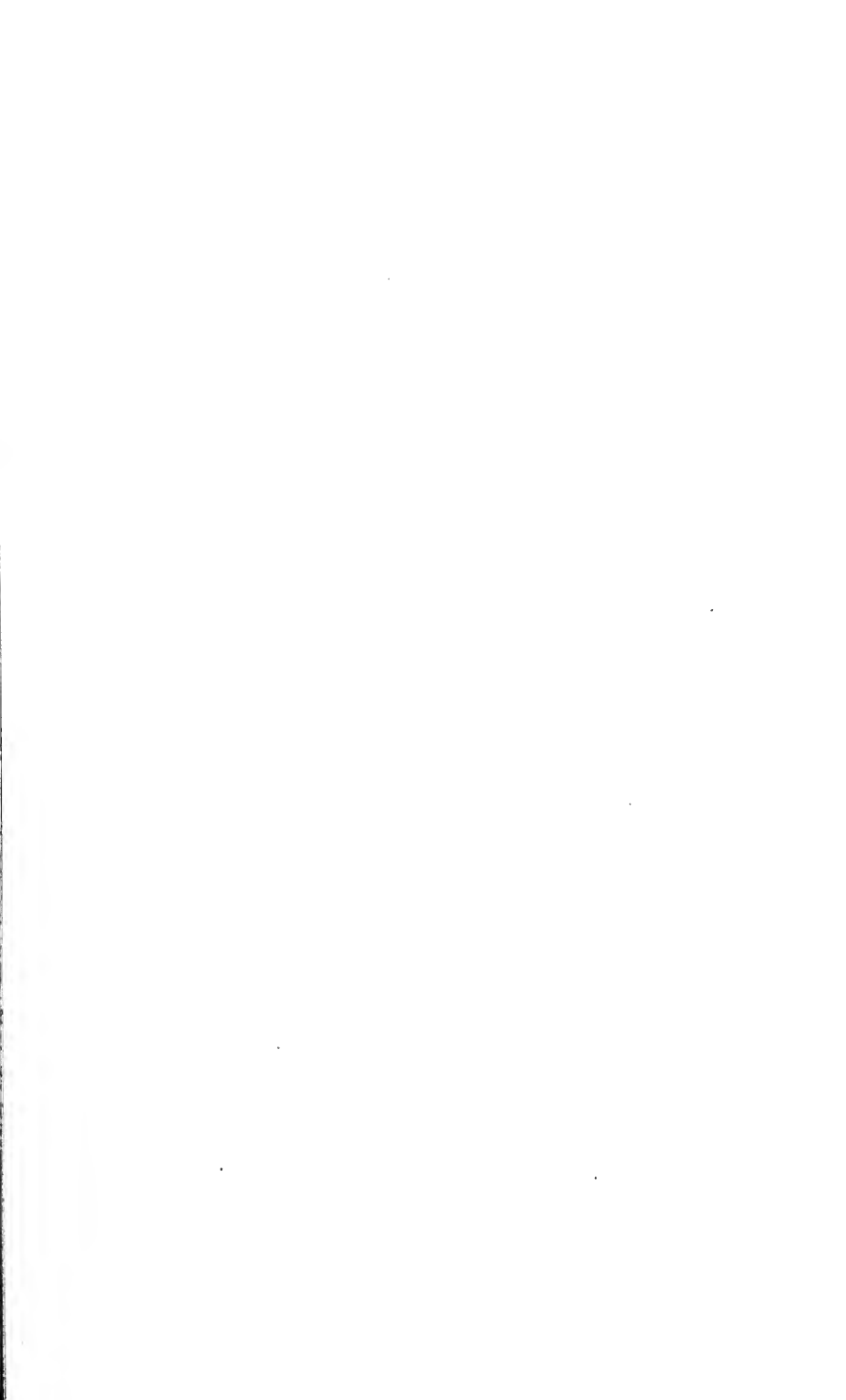
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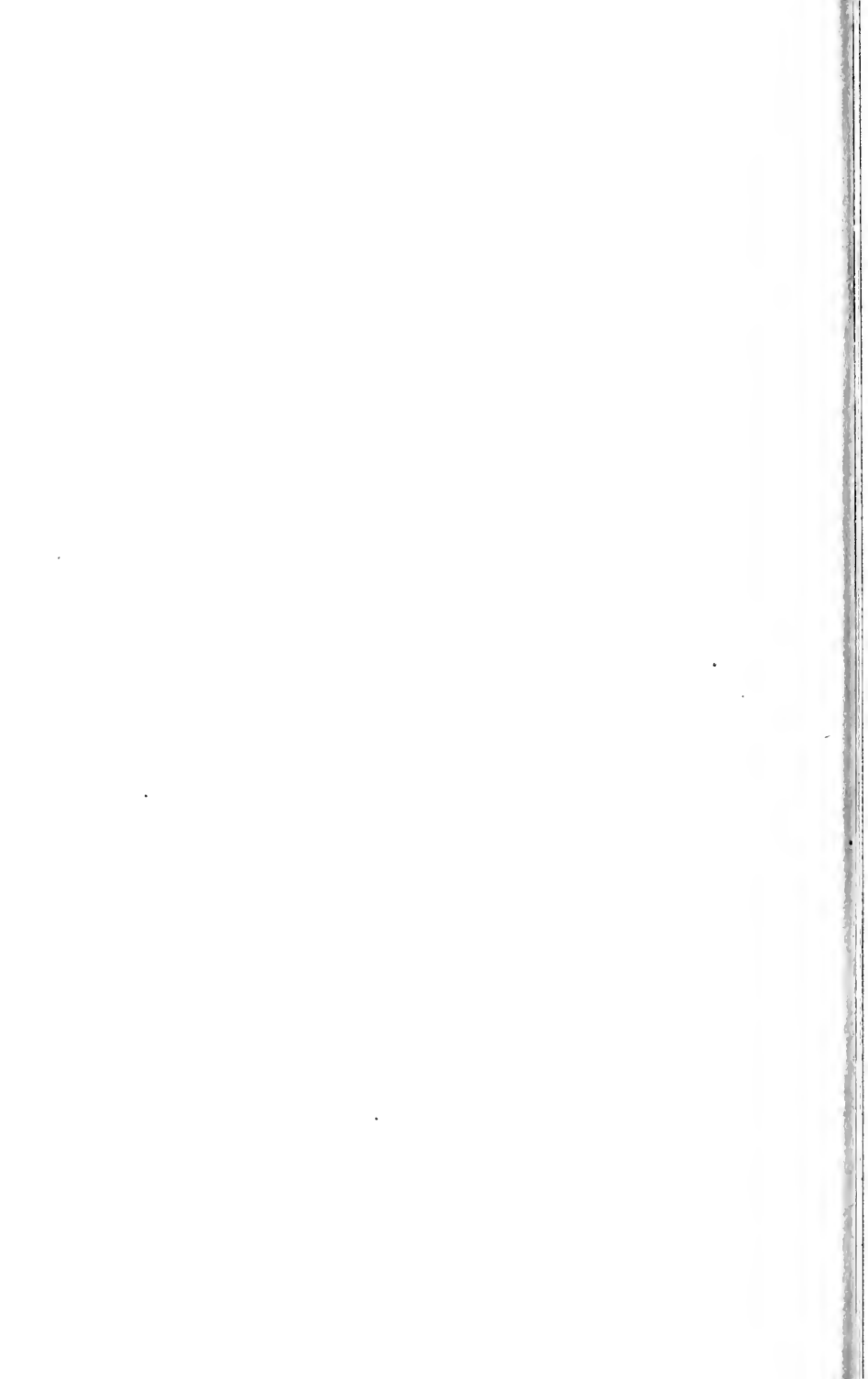
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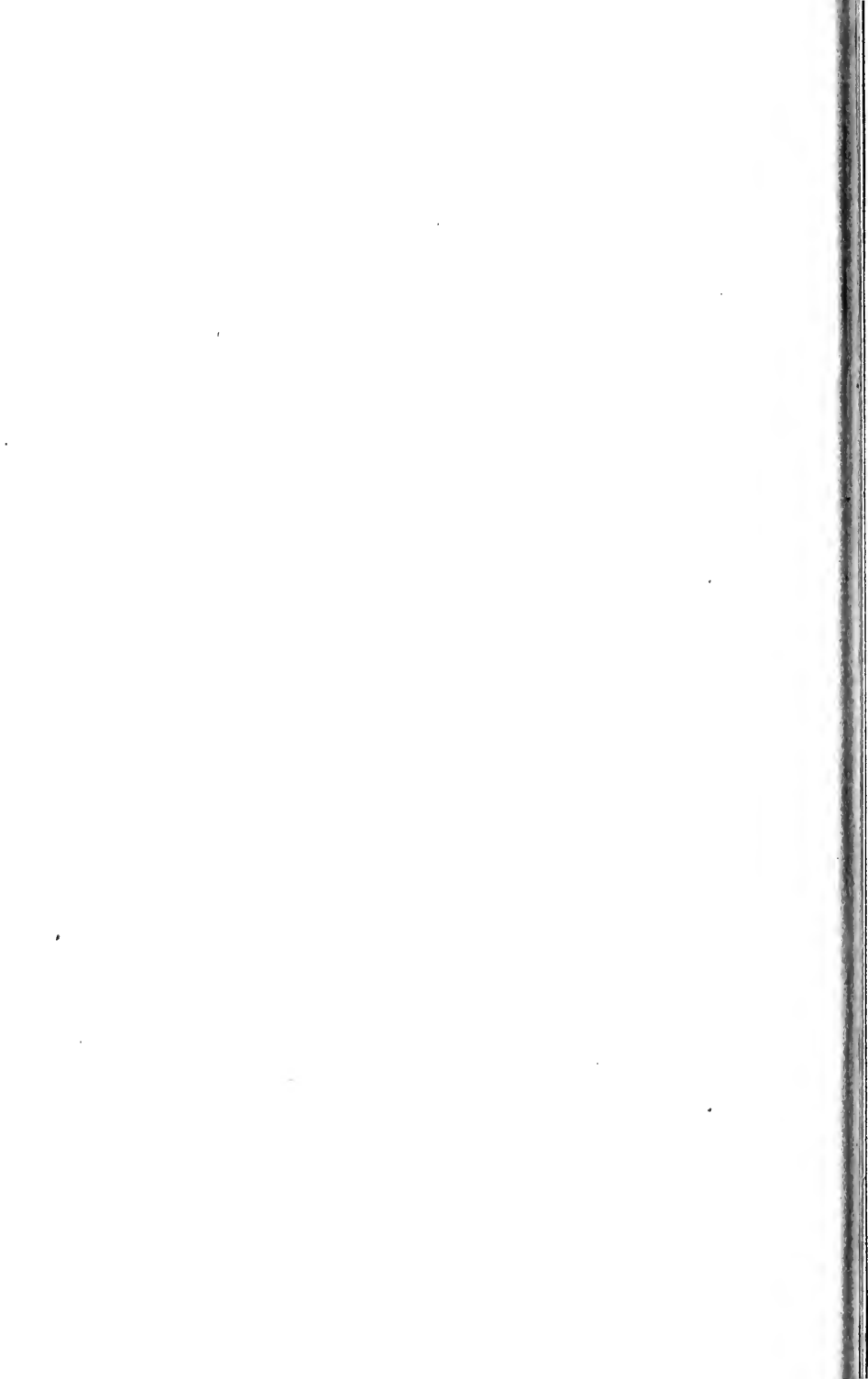
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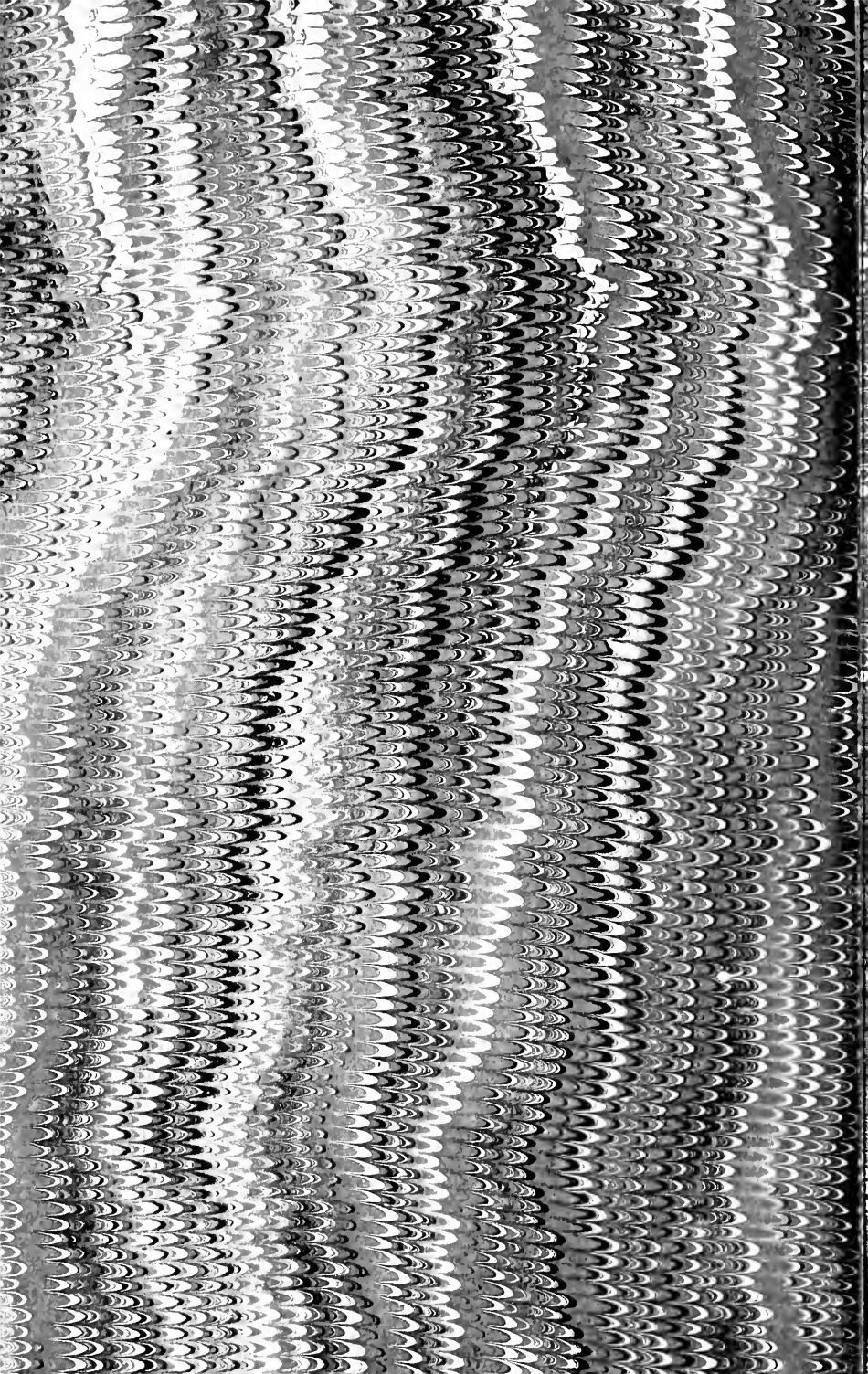


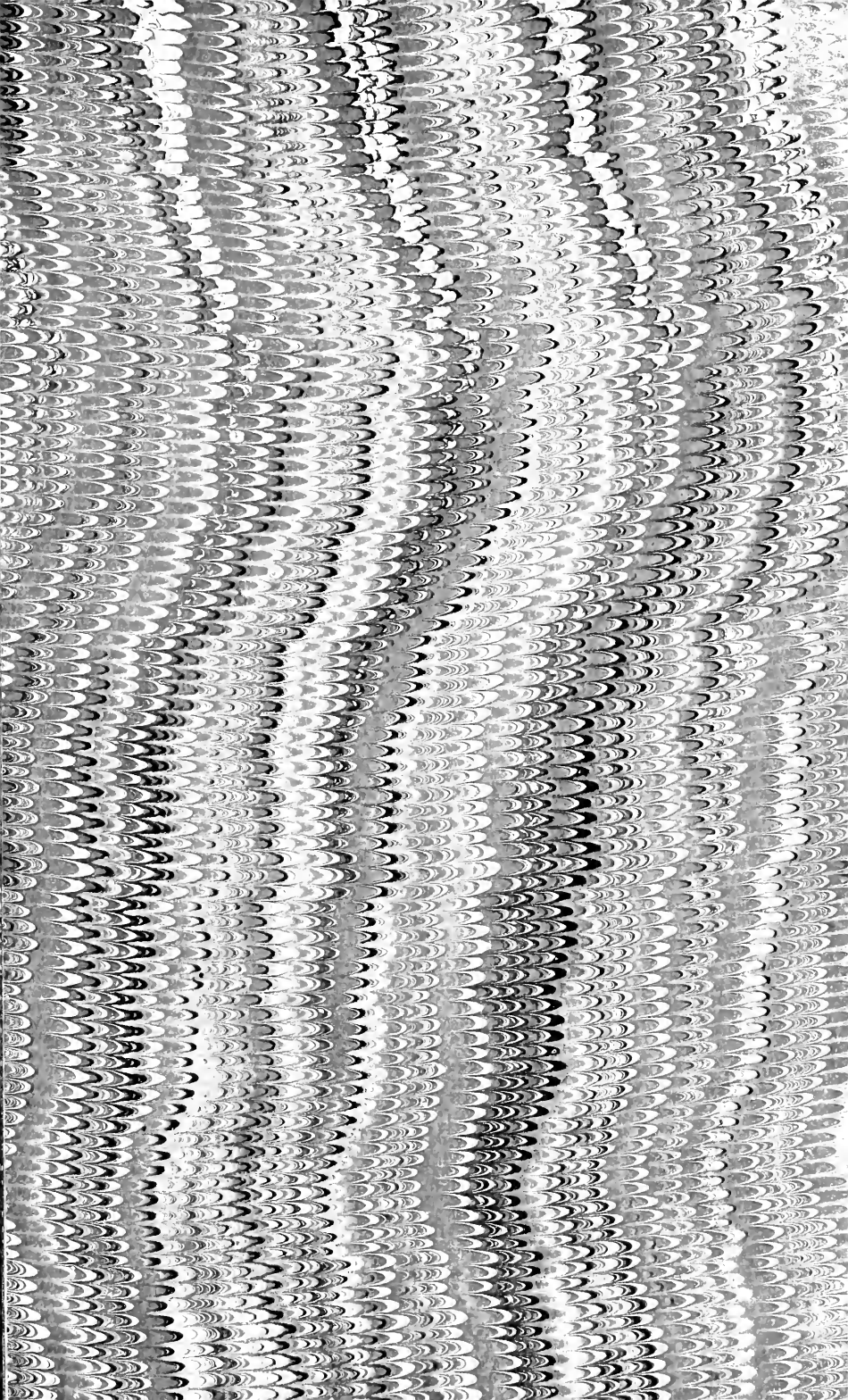












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